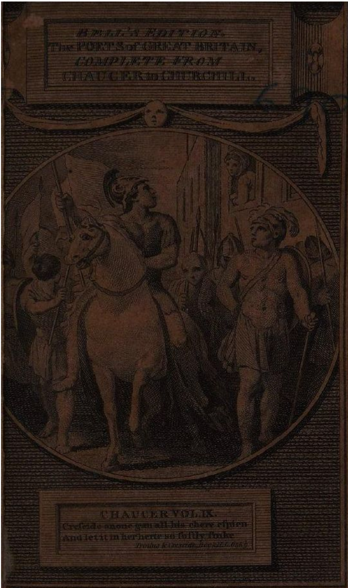

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Surgesfield Orkney

THE POETICAL WORKS OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of songes glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fulfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----
That made first to dystylle and rayne
The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence
Into our tunge thrugh his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----
My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
Universel fadir in science----
This londis verray tresour and richesse----
The firste fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condist and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere strand, and rois riall,
Of fresche endite throw Albioun iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raise in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,
The fresche enamilt termes celestiall:
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terrestriall
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

VOL. IX.

EDINBURG:
THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. IX.

CONTAINING HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale fain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath fayd hem in fwiche Englifh as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not fayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath fayd hem in another----
Who fo that wol his large Volume feke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of Englifh undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whofe gentle fpright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilft he lived was the foveraigne head
Of fhepherds all------- SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning ftar,
To us difcovers day from far;
His light thofe mifts and clouds diffolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he defcending to the fhades
Darknefs again the age invades. DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who firft with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He fang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eftate and age
The fafhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times------
Dark and untaught began with charming verfe
To tame the rudenefs of his native land. AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Prefs, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

IN FIVE BOKES.

PROŒMIUM LIBRI TERTII.

O Bliſfull light! of whiche the bemis clere
Adornith allè the third hevin faire,
O ſonn'is life! o Jov'is doughtir dere!
Pleſaunce of love! o godely debonaire!
In gentle hertes aie redy to repaire,
O very cauſe of hele and of gladneſſe,
Iheried be thy might and thy godeneſſe!

In heven and hell, in yerth and the ſalt ſe,
Is felt thy might, if that I well diſcerne,
As man, brid, beſte, fiſhe, herbe, and grenè tre,
Thẽi fele in timis with vapour eterne:
God lovith, and to love he woll naught werne;
And in this worldè no liv'is creture
Withoutin love is wroucht or maie endure.

Ye, Jovis, firſt to thilke affectis glade,
Through whiche that thingis livin all and be,
Commendidin and amorous him made
On mortall thing, and as ye liſt aie ye
Yeve him in love eſe or adverſite,
And in a thouſande formis doune him ſent
For love in yerth, and whom you liſt he hent.

Ye fiers Mars, apesin of his ire,
And as you list ye makin hertis digne,
Algatis them that ye woll set a fire
Thei dredin shame, and vicis thei resigne;
Ye doen 'hem curteis be, freshe, and benigne,
And hie or lowe astir a wight entendeth
The joyis that he hath your might it sendeth.

Ye holdin reigne and house in unite,
Ye sothfast cause of frendship ben also;
Ye knowin all thilke covered qualite
Of thingis whiche that folke on wondrin so
Whan thei can nat construe how it maie go
She lovith him, or why he lovith here,
As why this fishe nat that comith to were.

Ye folke a lawe have set in universe,
And this knowe I by them that lovirs be,
That who so strivith with you hath the werse:
Now ladie bright, for thy benignite,
At reverence of them that servin the,
Whose clerke I am, so techith me divise
Some joie of that is felt in thy service:

Ye in my nakid hert'is sentiment
Inhilde, and doe me shewe of thy sweteneste,
Caliope! thy voice be now present,
For now is nede; seest thou nat my distresse
How I mote tell anon right the gladnesse
Of Troilus to Venus herying?
To whiche gladnesse who nede hath God him bring!

Explicit proemium.

INCIPIT LIBER TERTIUS.

Laie all this mene while this ſad Troilus
Recording his leſſon in this manere,
Maſeie, thought he, thus woll I ſaie and thus,
Thus woll I plain unto my ladie dere,
That worde is gode, and this ſhall be my chere,
This n'ill I nat foryetin in no wiſe:
God leve him werkin as he can deviſe. 56

And, Lorde! ſo that his herte began to quappe
Hering her come, and ſhort gan for to ſike;
And Pandarus, that ledde her by the lappe,
Came nere, and gan in at the curtein pike,
And ſaied, God doe bote on all that are ſike!
Se who is here you comin to viſite;
Lo! here is ſhe that is your deth to wite. 63

Therwith it ſemid as he wept almoſte.
A a! quod Troilus, ſo routhfully,
Where me be wo o mightie God! thou woſte:
Who is all there I ſe nat truily.
Sir, (quod Creſeide) it is Pandare and I.
Ye, ſwetè herte, alas! I maie nat riſe
To knele, and doe you honour in ſome wiſe. 70

And dreſſid him upward; and ſhe right tho
Gan both her hondis ſoft upon him leie.
O, for the love of God doe ye not ſo
To me! (quod ſhe.) Ey, what is this to ſei!
Sir, comen' am I to you for cauſis tweie,
Firſt you to thonke, and of your lordſhipe eke
Continuaunce I wouldè you beſeke. 77

This Troilus, that herd his ladie praie
Of lordſhip, him woxe neithir quick ne dedde,
Ne might o worde for ſhame unto it ſaie,
Although, men ſhouldin ſmitin of his hedde,
But, Lorde! ſo he woxe ſodainliche alle redde;
And, Sir, his leſſon that he wendè conne
To prayin her is through his wit ironne.

Creſeide all this eſpyid well inough,
For ſhe was wiſe, and loved him ner the laſſe,
All n'ere he' in all aperte, or made it tough,
Or was to bolde to ſing a fol'is maſſe;
But whan his ſhame began ſomwhat to paſſe
His reſons, as I maie my rimis holde,
I woll you tell as techin bokis olde.

In chaungid voice, right for his very drede,
Whiche voice eke quoke, and therto his manere
Godelie abaſh't, and now his hewis rede
Now pale, unto Creſeide his ladie dere,
With loke doune caſt and humble yoldin chere,
Lo the aldirfirſt worde that him aſterte
Was twyis, Mercie, mercie, my dere herte!

And ſtint a while, and whan he might out bring
The nextè word, was, God wote for I have
As faithfully as I have had konning
Ben your'is all, God ſo my ſoulè ſave,
And ſhall, till that I wofull wight be grave,
And though I dare ne can unto you plain
Iwis I ſuffir not the laſſè pain.

Thus moche as now, ah womanlichè wife!
I maie out bring, and if this you diſpleſe
That ſhall I wreke upon mine ownè life
Right ſone I trowe, and doe your herte an eſe,
If with my deth your hert I maie apeſe;
But ſens that ye han herd me ſomwhat ſey
Now retche I nevir how ſone that I deie. 112

Therwith his manly ſorowe to beholde
It might have made an herte of ſtone to rew,
And Pandare wept as he to watir would,
And pokid evir his nece newe and newe,
And ſayid, Wo begon ben hertis true;
For love of God make of this thing an ende,
Or ſlea us both at ones er that ye wende. 119

I, what? (quod ſhe.) By God and by my trouth
I n'ot nevir what ye wilne that I ſeie.
Eie! what? (quod he) that ye have on him routh
For Godd'is love, and doeth him nat to deie.
Now than thus, (quod ſhe) I wollin him preie
To tellin me the fine of his entente;
Yet wiſt I nevir well what that he mente. 126

What that I mene, o my ſwete hertè dere!
(Quod Troilus) o godely freſhe and fre!
That with the ſtremis of your eyin clere
Ye wouldin ſomtime frendly on me ſe,
And than agrein that I maie ben he
Withoutin braunche of vice on any wiſe
In trouthe alwaie to do you my ſervife, 133

As to my ladie right, and chefe reſort,
With all my witte and all my diligence,
And I to have right as you liſt comfort,
Under your yerde egall to mine offence,
As deth, if that I brekin your defence,
And that ye digne me ſo mochil honour
Me to commaundin aught in any hour, 140

And I to ben your very humble, true,
Secrete, and in my painis pacient,
And evir to deſirin freſhly newe
To ſervin, and ben aie like diligent,
And with gode herte all wholly your talent
Recevin in gre, how ſore that me ſmerte:
Lo, this mene I, o mine owne ſwetè herte! 147

(Quod Pandarus) Lo! here an hard requeſt,
And reſo'nable a ladie for to werne;
Now necè mine, by Natall Jov'is feſt,
Were I a god ye ſhouldin ſterve as yerne,
That herin well this man wol nothing yerne
But your honor, and ſene him almoſte ſterve,
And ben ſo lothe to ſuffre' him you to ſerve. 154

With that ſhe gan her eyin on him caſt
Full eſily and full debonairly,
Aviſing her, and hied her not to faſt
With ner a worde, but ſaied him ſoftily,
Mine honour ſafe I woll well truily,
And in ſoche forme as ye can now deviſe,
Recevin him fully to my ſerviſe; 161

Beseching him, for Godd'is love, that he
Would in honour of trouth and gentillnesse,
As I well mene, eke menin well to me,
And mine honour with wit and businesse
Aie kepe; and if I maie doen him gladnesse
From hennisforthe iwis I n'ill not faine:
Now bethe all whole, no lengir ye ne plain. 168

But nathèlesse this warne I you, (quod she)
A king'is sonne although ye be iwis,
Yet ye shall no more have sovèrainte
Of me in love than right in that case is,
Ne n'ill I forbere if ye doen amis
To wrathin you, and while that ye me serve
Cherishe you right aftir that ye deserve. 175

And shortily, dere herte, and all my knight!
Beth glad, and drawith you to lustinesse,
And I shall truely, with all my full might,
Your bittir tourin all to swetinesse,
If I be she that maie do you gladnesse;
For every wo ye shall recovir blisse,
And him in armis toke, and gan him kisse. 182

Fill Pandarus on knees, and up his eyen
To hevin threwe, and helde his hondis hie;
Immortall god! (quod he) that maiest not dien,
Cupide, of this thou maist the glorifie,
And Venus, thou maist makin melodie:
Withoutin honde me semith that in toune
For this miracle I here eche bell soune. 189

But ho! no more now of this ilke matere;
For why? this folke woll comin up anone
That have the lettir redde; lo! I 'hem here;
But I conjure the Creseidè anone,
And thou to Troilus, whan thou maist gone,
That at mine house ye ben at my warning,
For I full well shall shapin your comming; 196

And esith there your hertis right inough,
And let se whiche of you shall bere the bell
To speke of love, and right therwith he lough,
For there have ye a leisir for to tell.
(Quod Troilus) How long shall I here dwell
Er this be doen? Quod he, Whan thou maiest rise
This thing shall be right as you list devise. 203

With that Helen and also Deiphobus
Tho comin upward, right at the staire's ende,
And, Lorde! so tho gan gronin Troilus,
His brothir and his sustir for to blende.
(Quod Pandarus) It time is that we wende;
Take, necè mine, your leve at them all thre,
And let 'hem speke, and comith forth with me. 210

She toke her leve at 'hem full thriftily,
As she well could, and thei her reverence
Unto the full ydiddin hertily,
And wondir well spekin in her absence
Of her, in praising of her excellence,
Her govirnaunce, her wit, and her manere
Commendidin, that it joie was to here. 217

Now let her wende unto her ownè place,
And tournin we to Troilus againe,
That gan full lightly of the lettir pace
That Deiphobus had in the gardine faine,
And of Helen and of him he would feine
Delivirid ben, and faied that him left
To flepe, and aftir talis have a reft.

Helen him kift, and toke her leve as blive,
Deiphobus eke, and home went every wight,
And Pandarus as fafte as he maie drive
To Troilus tho came as linè right,
And on a paillet all that gladè night
By Troilus he laie with merie chere,
And well was them that thei werin yfere.

Whan every wight was voidid but thei two,
And all the doris werin faft ifhet,
To tell in fhort, withoutin wordis mo,
This Pandarus withoutin any let
Up rofe, and on his bedd'is fide him fet,
And gan to fpekin in a fobir wife
To Troilus as I fhall you devife.

Mine aldirlevift Lorde, and brothir dere!
God wot and thou that it fate me fo fore,
Whan I the fawe fo languifhing to yere
For love, of whiche thy wo woxe alwaie more,
That I with all my might and all my lore
Have ever fithin doen my bufineffe
To bringin the to joie out of diftreffe;

And have it brought to ſoche plite as thou woſt,
So that through me thou ſtondiſt now in waie
To farin well, I ſaie it for no boſt;
And woſt thou why? but ſhame it is to ſaie,
For the have I begon a game to plaie
Whiche that I nevir doen ſhall eft for other,
Altho he were a thouſande fold my brother; 252

That is to ſaie, for the am I become,
Betwixin game and erneſt, ſoche a mene
As makin women unto men to come,
All ſaie I nat, thou woſt well what I mene,
For the have I my nece, of vicis clene,
So fully made thy gentillneſſe to triſt
That all ſhall ben right as thy ſelfin liſt. 259

But God, that all wotteth, take I to witneſſe
That nevir this for covetiſe I wrought,
But onely for to abredge that diſtreſſe
For whiche well nie thou deydiſt, as me thought;
But, gode brothir, doith now as the ought
For Godd'is love, and kepe her out of blame,
Sins thou art wiſe, and ſave alwaie her name: 266

For wel thou woſte the name as yet of her
Emonges the peple'as (who ſaieth) halowed is,
For that man is unbore, I dare well ſwere,
That evir wiſt that ſhe yet did amis:
But wo is me that I that cauſe all this
Maie thinkin that ſhe is my necè dere,
And I her eme, and traitour eke iſere. 273

And wer it wist that I through mine engine
Had in my nece iput this fantasie
To doen thy lust, and wholly to be thine,
Why, all the worlde wouldin upon it crie,
And sayin that I the worst trecherie
Did in this case that evir was begon,
And she fordon, and thou right nought iwon. 280

Wherefore er I woll ferthir gone or paas
Yet efte I the beseche and fully saie
That privite go with us in this caas,
That is to saine, that thou us nevir wraie;
And be not wrothe though I the oftin praie
To holdin secre soche an high matter,
For skilfull is (thou woste well) my praier. 287

And thinke what wo there hath betid er this
For making of avauntis, as men rede,
And what mischaunce in this worlde yet there is
Fro daie to daie right for that wickid dede,
For whiche these wise clerkis that ben dede
Have evir this proverbid to us young,
That *The first vertue is to kepe the toung.* 294

And n'ere it that I wilne as now abredge
Diffusion of speche, I could almoste
A thousande oldè stories the aledge
Of women loste through false and fol'is boste;
Proverbis canst thy self inow, and woste
Ayenist that vice for to ben a blabbe
All saied men sothe, as oftin as thei gabbe. 301

O tongue, alas! so oftin here before
Hast thou made many' a ladie bright of hewe
Saied, Welawaie the daie that I was bore!
And many' a maidins sorowe for to newe;
And for the more parte all is but untrue
That men of yelpe and it wer brought to preve;
Of kindè none avauntour is to leve. 308

Avauntour and a lier all is one,
As thus; I suppose a woman graunt me
Her love, and saieth that othir woll she none,
And I am sworne to holdin it secre,
And aftir I goe tell it two or thre;
Iwis I am a vauntour at the lest,
And lier eke, for I breke my behest. 315

Now lokith than if thei be not to blame
Soche manir folk, what shal I clepe 'hem, what?
That 'hem avaunt of women, and by name,
That yet behight 'hem nevir this ne that,
Ne knowin 'hem no more than mine olde hat:
No wondir is, so God me sendin hele,
Though women dredin with us men to dele. 322

I saie nat this for no mistrust of you,
Ne for no wise men, but for folis nice,
And for the harme that in the worlde is now
As well for folie oft as for malice,
For well wote I that in wise folke that vice
No woman drat, if she be well avised,
For *Wise men ben by folis harme chastised.* 329

But now to purpoſe, levè brothir dere!
Have all this thing that I have ſaied in minde,
And kepe the cloſe, and be now of gode chere,
For all thy daies thou ſhalt me true yſinde;
I ſhall thy proceſſe ſet in ſoche a kinde,
And God toforne, that it ſhall the ſuffiſe,
For it ſhall be right as thou wolt deviſe.

For well I wote thou meniſt well parde,
Therefore I dare this fully undirtake;
Thou woſt eke what thy ladie grauntid the,
And daie is ſet the charteris to make:
Have now gode night, I maie no lengir wake,
And bid for me, ſith thou art now in bliſſe,
That God me ſendè deth or ſonè liſſe.

Who might ytellin halfe the joie or feſte
Whiche that the ſoule of Troilus tho felte!
Hering the' effect of Pandarus beheſte
His oldè wo, that made his herte to ſwelt,
Gan tho for joie to waſtin and to melt,
And all the reheting of his ſikes ſore
At onis fled, he felt of 'hem no more;

But right ſo as theſe holtes and theſe hayis
That han in wintir dedde yben and drie
Reveſtin 'hem in grene whan that Maie is,
Whan every luſtie beſte liſtith to pleie,
Right in that ſelfin wiſe, ſothe for to ſeie,
Woxe ſodainly his hertè full of joie,
That gladdir was there nevir man in Troie;

And gan his loke on Pandarus up caſt
Full ſobirly, and frendly on to ſe,
And ſayid, Frende, in Aprilis the laſt,
As well thou woſt, if it remembir the,
How nigh the deth for wo thou foundè me,
And how thou diddiſt all thy buſineſſe
To knowe of me the cauſe of my diſtreſſe; 364

Thou woſt how long I it forbare to ſaie
To the that art the man that I beſt triſt,
And perill none was to the to bewraie,
That wiſt I well; but tell me if the liſt,
Sith I ſo lothe was that thy ſelf it wiſt,
How durſt I mo tellin of this matere
That quake now tho no wight maie us here? 371

But nathèleſſe, by that God I the ſwere,
That as him liſt maie all this world governe,
And if I lie Achilles with his ſpere
Mine hertè cleve, all were my life eterne,
As I am mortall, if I late or yerne
Would it bewraie, or durſt, or ſhould, or conne,
For all the gode that God made undir ſonne; 378

That rathir die I would and determine,
As thinkith me now, ſtockid in priſoun,
In wretchidneſſe, in filthe, and in vermine,
Captiſe to cruill King Agamemnoun;
And this in all the templis of this toun,
Upon the goddis all, I woll the ſwere,
To morowe daie, if that the likith here. 385

And that thou haſt ſo moche idoen for me
That I ne maie it nevirmore deſerve
This knowe I well, all might I now for the
A thouſande timis on a morowe ſterve;
I can no more but that I woll the ſerve
Right as thine own ſlave, whithir ſo thou wende,
For evirmore unto my liv'is ende.

But here with al mine herte I the beſeche
That nevir in me thou deme ſoche ſolie,
As I ſhall sainè, me thought by thy ſpeche,
That this whiche thou me doeſt for companie
I ſhould wenin it were a baudèrie;
I am not wode all if I leude ybe:
It is nat ſo, that wote I well parde.

But he that goeth for gold or for richeſſe
On ſoche meſſagis, call him what ye liſt,
And this that thou doeſt, call it gentilneſſe,
Compaſſion, and felowſhip, and triſt,
Departin it ſo, for widewhere is wiſt
How that there is diverſite requered
Betwixin thingis like, as I have lered.

And that thou knowe I ne thinke not ne wene
That this ſervice a ſhame be or a jape,
I have my fairè ſuſtir Polyxene,
Caſſandra', Helen, or any of the frape,
Be ſhe nevir ſo faire or well iſhape,
Tell me whiche thou wilt of everichone
To have for thine, and let me than alone.

But fith that thou haft doen me this fervice
My life to fave, and for non hope of mede,
So for the love of God this grete emprife
Performe it out, for now is the mofte nede;
For high and lowe, withoutin any drede,
I woll alwaie thine heftis allè kepe:
Have now gode night, and let us bothè flepe.

Thus helde 'hem eche of othir well apaied,
That all the worlde ne might it bet amende,
And on the morowe, whan thei were araied
Eche to his ownè nedis gan entende:
But Troilus, though as the fire he brende
For fharpe defire of hope and of plefaunce,
He not forgate his gode wife govirnaunce;

But in himfelf with manhode gan reftrain
Eche rakill dede and eche unbridlid chere,
That all tho that livin, fothe for to faine,
Ne fhould have wifte by worde or by manere
What that he ment as touching this matere,
From every wight as ferre as is the cloud,
He was fo wife, and wel diffimu'len coud.

And all the while whiche that I now devife
This was his life, with all his fullè might,
By daie he was in Mart'is high fervice,
That is to fain, in armis as a knight,
And fore the more part all the longè night
He lay and thought how that he might yferve
His ladie befte, her thanke for to deferve.

N'ill I not swerin, although he laie soft,
That in his thought he n'as somwhat disesed,
Ne that he tournid on his pillowes oft,
And would of that him missid have ben esed;
But in soche case men be nat alwaie plesed
For aught I wotè, no more than was he,
That can I deme of possibilite. 448

But certain is, to purpose for to go,
That in this while, as writtin is in geste,
He sawe his ladie somtime, and also
She with him spake whan that she durst and leste,
And by ther both avise, as was the beste,
Appoinctidin full warely in this nede,
So as thei durst, how thei wouldin procede. 455

But it was spokin in so short a wise,
In soche awaite alwaie, and in soche fere,
Lest any wight devinin or devise
Would of 'hem two, or to it laie an ere,
That all this worlde so lefe to 'hem ne were
As that Cupido would 'hem his grace sende
To makin of ther purpose right an ende. 462

But thilkè little that thei spake or wrought
His wise ghoste toke aie of all soche hede,
It semid her he wistè what she thought
Withoutin worde, so that it was no nede
To bid him aught to doen or aught forbede,
For which she thought that love, al come it late,
Of allè joie had openid her the yate. 469

And ſhortly to this proceſſe for to pace,
So well his werke and wordis he beſet
That he ſo full ſtode in his ladie's grace
That twentie thouſande timis er ſhe let
She thonkid God ſhe evir with him met;
So could he him governe in ſoche ſervice
That all the worlde ne might it bet deviſe: 476

For why? ſhe founde him ſo diſcrete in all,
So ſecrete, and eke of ſoche obeiſaunce,
That well ſhe felt he was to her a wall
Of ſteele, and ſhelde from every diſpleſaunce,
That to yben in his gode govirnaunce,
So wiſe he was, ſhe was no more afered,
I mene as ferre as it ought ben requered. 483

And Pandarus to quicke alwaie the fire
Was evir ilike preſt and diligent;
To eſe his frende was ſet al his deſire;
He ſhove aie on; he to and fro was ſent,
He lettirs bare whan Troilus was abſent,
That nevir man as in his frend'is nede
Ne bare him bet than he withoutin drede. 490

But now para'venture ſome man waitin wold
That every worde or ſonde, or loke or chere,
Of Troilus that I rehercin ſhold,
In al this while unto his lady dere,
I trowe it were a long thing for to here,
Or of what wight that ſtonte in ſuche diſtointe
His wordis al or every loke to pointe. 497

Forsothe I have not herde it done er this
In storie none, ne no man here I wene,
And though I would yet I could not iwis,
For there was some epistel 'hem betwene
That would (as saith min auctor) wel contene
Nie halfe this boke, of which him list not write;
How should I than a line of it endite?

But to the gret effecte than saie I thus,
That stonding in concorde and in quiete
This ilkè two, Creseide and Troilus,
As I have tolde, and in this timè swete,
Save onely oftin mightin thei not mete,
Ne leisir have ther spechis to fulfell,
That it befil right as I shal you tell,

That Pandarus, that evir did his might
Right for the fine that I shal speke of here,
As for to bringin to his house some night
His fairè nece and Troilus ifere,
Where as at leisir al this high matere
Touching her love were at the ful up bounde,
Had out of doute a time to it yfounde:

For he with grete deliberacion
Had every thing that therto might availe
Forne cast, and put in execution,
And neithir lefte for coste ne for travaile;
Come if 'hem liste 'hem shouldè nothing faile,
And for to ben in aught espyid there
That wiste he wel an impossible were.

And dredèleſſe it clere was in the winde
Of every pie and evèry letgame,
Now al is wel, for al the world is blinde
In this matir bothè fremid and tame;
This timbir is al redy up to frame;
Us lackith naught but that we wetin wold
A certaine houre in whiche ſhe comin ſhold.

And Troilus, that al this purveiaunce
Knew at the ful, and waitid on it aie,
And hereupon eke made gret ordinaunce,
And founde his cauſe and therwith his aray,
Yf that he were ymiſſid night or day,
There while he was aboutin this ſervice,
That he was gon to don his ſacrifice,

And muſte at ſuche a temple alone wake,
Anſwerid of Apollo for to be,
And firſt to ſene the holy laurir quake
Er that Apollo ſpake out of the tre,
To tellin him whan Grekis next ſhould fle;
And forthy let him no man, God forbede!
But praie Apollo helpiñ in this nede.

Now is there litill more for to be done
But Pandare up, and, ſhortly for to ſaine,
Right ſone upon the chaunging of the mone,
Whan lightleſſe is the world a night or twaine,
And that the welkin ſhope him for to raine,
He ſtreight amorowe unto his nece went,
Ye have wel herde the fine of his entente.

When he was comen' he gan anon to plaie,
As he was wont, and of himselfe to jape,
And finally he swore, and gan her saie
By this and that, she should him not escape,
No lengir done him aftir her to cape,
But certainly that she must, by her leve,
Come soupin in his house with him at eve.

At which she lough, and gan her first excuse,
And said, It rainith, lo! how should I gone?
Let be, (quod he) ne stonde not thus to muse;
This mote be don, ye shal come there anone,
So at the last herof thei fel at one,
Or ellis soft he swore her in her ere
He n'olde nevir comin there she were.

Sone aftir this she unto him gan rowne,
And askid him if Troilus were there?
He swore her Nay, for he was out of towne,
And said, What, nece, I pose that he were there,
You durst nevir thereof have the more fere?
For rathir than men might him there aspie
Me levir were a thousande folde to die.

Naught list mine auctour fully to declare
What that she thought whan that he said her so,
That Troilus was out of toune ifare,
And if he saidè therof soth or no,
But that without awaite with him to go
She grauntid him, sithe he her that besought,
And as his nece obeyid as her ought.

But nathèleſſe yet gan ſhe him beſeche,
Although with him to gone it was no fere,
For to beware of goſiſhe peplis ſpeche,
That dremin thingis which that nevir were,
And well aviſin him whom he brought there;
And ſaid him, Eme, ſens I muſt on you triſt
Loke al be wel; I do now as you liſt. 588

He ſwore her this by ſtockis and by ſtones,
And by the goddis that in hevin dwell,
Or ellis were him levir ſoule and bones
With Pluto King as depè ben in hell
As Tantalus: what ſhouldin I more tell?
Whan al was wel he roſe and toke his leve,
And ſhe to ſoupir came whan it was eve, 595

With a certaine numbre of her owne men,
And with her fayir nece Antigone,
And othir of her women nine or ten;
But who was glad nowe, who, as trowyin ye?
But Troilus, that ſtode and might it ſe
Throughout a litil window in a ſtewe,
Ther he beſhet till midnight was in mewe, 602

Unwiſt of every wight but of Pandare.
But to the point. Now whan that ſhe was come
With al joie, and al her frendis in fare,
Her eme anone in armis hath her nome,
And aftir to the ſoupir al and ſome,
Whan as time was, ful ſofte thei 'hem yſet,
God wot there was no deinte ferre to fet. 609

And aftir soupir gonnin thei to rise,
At ese wel, with hertis full fresh and glade,
And wel was him that coudė best devise
To likin her, or that her laughin made:
He songe, she plaide; he tolde a tale of Wade;
But at the last, as every thing hath ende,
She toke her leve, and nedis would thens wende. 616

But, o Fortune! executrice of wierdes,
O influencis of these hevins hie!
Soth is that undir God ye ben our hierdes,
Though to us bestis ben the causis wrie;
This mene I now, for she gan homward hie;
But execute was al beside her leve
The goddis wil, for whiche she must bileve. 623

The bentė mone with her hornis all pale,
Saturn and Jove, in Cancro joynid were,
That suche a raine from hevin gan availe
That every manir woman that was there
Had of that smoky raine a very fere,
At the which Pandare tho lough, and said thenne,
Now were it time a lady to gone henne? 630

But, godė nece, if that I might evir plese
You any thing, than pray I you (quod he)
To don mine hert as now so gret an ese
As for to dwell here al this night with me;
For why? this is your ownė house parde,
For by my trouthe, I say it nat in game,
To wende as nowe it were to me a shame. 637

Creseidè, which that could as mokil gode
As halfe a world, toke hede of his prayere,
And fens it rained, and al was in a flode,
She thought as gode chepe may I dwellin here,
And graunt it gladly with a frend'is chere,
And have a thonke, as grutche and than abide,
For home to gon it may nat well betide.

I wol, (quod fhe) mine uncle lefe and dere!
Sens that you lift; it fkil is to be fo;
I am right glad with you to dwellin here;
I feidè but in game that I wolde goe.
Iwis graunt mercy! necè, (quod he) tho;
Were it a game or no, the fothe to tell,
Now am I glad fens that you lift to dwell.

Thus al is wel; but tho began aright
The newè joy, and al the feft againe;
But Pandarus, if godely had he might,
He would have hyid her to bedde full faine,
And faid, O Lorde! this is an hugè raine,
This were a wethir for to flepin in,
And that I rede us fonè to begin:

And, necè, wote ye where I wol you laie?
For that we fhul nat liggin ferre afonder,
And for ye neithir fhullin, dare I faie,
Herin the noife of rainis ne of thonder,
By God right in my litil clofet yonder,
And I wol in that uttir houfe alone
Ben wardain of your women everichone;

And in this middle chambre that ye ſe
Shal all your women ſlepin wel and ſofte,
And there I ſayid ſhal your ſelvin be,
And if ye liggin wel to night come ofte,
And carith not what wethir is aloſte.
Goth in anone, and whan ſo that ye leſt
Go we to ſlepe, I trowe it be the beſt.

There n'is no more, but here aftir ſone
Thei drank, voidid, and curtins drew anone;
Gan every wight that hadde nought to done
More in the place out of the chambre gone;
And evir more ſo ſternèliche it rone,
And blewe therwith ſo wonderlichè loude,
That wel nigh no man herin othir coude.

Tho Pandarus her eme, right as him ought,
With women ſuche as were her moſt aboute,
Ful glad unto her bedd'is ſide her brought,
And toke his leve, and gan ful lowe to loute,
And ſaid, Here at this cloſet dore withoute
Right ovirthwart your women liggin all,
That whom ye liſt of 'hem ye maie ſone call.

So whan that ſhe was in the cloſet laide,
And al her women forth by ordinaunce
A bedde werin, there as I have yſaide,
There n'as no more to ſkippin nor to praunce
But bodin go to beddè with miſchaunce,
If any wight ſtering were any where,
And let 'hem ſlepin that abedde ywere.

But Pandarus, that wel couthe eche adele
The olde daunce, and evèry point therin,
Whan that he wistè that all thing was wele,
He thought he wolde upon his werke begin,
And gan the stewè dore all soft unpin
As stil as stone, withoutin lengir lette;
By Troilus adoun right he him sette. 700

And, shortly to the pointe right for to gone,
Of al this werke he told him orde and ende,
And sayid, Make the redy right anone,
For thou shalt into hevin blisse ywende.
Now blisful Venus! thou me grace ysende,
(Quod Troilus) for nevir yet no nede
Had I er now, ne halfindele the drede. 707

(Quod Pandarus) Ne drede the ner a dele,
For it shal be right as thou wolt desire;
So thrive I this night shal I make it wele,
Or castin all the gruil in the fire.
Yet, blisful Venus! this night thou me' enspire,
(Quod Troilus) as wis as I the serve,
And evir bet and bet shal til I sterve, 714

And if I had, o Venus ful of mirthe!
Aspectis badde of Mars or of Saturne,
Or thou Combuste, or let were in my birth,
Thy father pray I al thilke harme disturne
Of grace, and that I glad aien maie turne,
For love of him thou lovidest in the shawe,
I mene Adon, that with the bore was slawe: 721

O Jove! eke for the love of faire Europe,
The which in form of bulle awaie thou ſet;
Now helpe, o Mars! that with thy blody cope,
For love of Cypria, thou me naught ne let;
O Phœbus! think when Daphne her ſelve ſhet
Undir the barke, and laurir woxe for drede,
Yet for her love o helpe me at this nede! 728

O Mercurie! for the love of her eke
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wrothe
Now helpe; and eke Diane! I the beſeke
That this viage ne be nat to the lothe;
O Fatall Suſtrin! whiche or any clothe
Me ſhapin was my deſtine me ſponne,
So helpith to this werke that is begonne! 735

(Quod Pandarus) Thou wretchid mouc'is hert,
Art thou agaſt ſo that ſhe wol the bite?
Why, do on this furred cloke upon thy ſherte,
And folowe me, for I wol have the wite,
But bide, and let me gon before alite;
And with that worde he gan undone a trappe,
And Troilus he brought in by the lappe. 742

The ſternè winde ſo loude began to route
That no wight other'is noiſe might yhere,
And thei that layin at the dore without
Full ſikirly thei ſleptin all iſere;
And Pandarus with a ful ſobre chere
Goth to the dore anon withoutin lette
There as thei lay, and ſoftily it ſhette; 749

And as he came ayenwarde privily
His nece awoke, and askith, Who goeth there?
Mine ownè dere nece! (quod he) it am I,
Ne wondrith not, ne have of it no fere;
And nere he came, and said her in her ere,
No worde for love of God I you beseche,
Let no wight rise and herin of our speche.

What! whiche waie be ye comen? *Benedicite!*
(Quod she) and how thus unwiste of 'hem all?
Here at this secret trappè dore (quod he.)
(Quod tho Creseide) Let me some wight call.
Eigh! God forbid that it should so befall
(Quod Pandarus) that ye suche foly wrought!
Thei might demin thing that thei nevir thought.

It is nat gode a sleping hounde to wake,
Ne yeve a wight a cause for to devine:
Your women slepin al I undirtake,
So that for them the house men mightin mine,
And slepin wollin till the sunnè shine,
And when my tale ybrought is to an ende
Unwist right as I came so wol I wende.

Now, necè mine, ye shul well undirstonde,
(Quod he) so as ye women demin all,
That for to holde in love a man in honde,
And him her lefe and her dere hert to call,
And makin him an how above a call,
I mene, as love an othir in mene while,
She doth her selfe a shame and him a gile.

Now wherby that I tellin you al this
Ye wote your selfe as wel as any wight,
How that your love al fully grauntid is
To Troilus, that is the worthiest wight
One of the world, and therto trouth iplight,
That but it were on him alonge ye n'olde
Him nevir falsin while ye livin sholde. 784

Now stonte it thus, that sith I fro you went
This Troilus, right platly for to seine,
Is through a guttir by a privy went
Into my chambre come in al this reine,
Unwist of every manir wight certaine
Save of my selfe, as wisely have I joie,
And by the faith I owe Priam of Troie: 791

And he is come in suche paine and distresse
That but he be all fully wode by this
He sodainly mote fall into wodenesse
But if God helpe: and the cause why is this,
He saith him told is of a frende of his
How that ye should love one that hight Horast,
For sorow of which this night shal be his last. 798

Creseide, whiche that al this wondir herde,
Gan sodainly aboute her hert to colde,
And with a sigh she sorowfully answerd,
Alas! I wende whosoere talis tolde,
My dere hert, certis, eme, would me nat holde
So lightly faulse: alas! conceitis wrong
What harme thei done! for now live I to long. 805

Horaſte, alas! and falſin Troilus!
I knowe him not, God helpe me ſo! (quod ſhe.)
Alas! what wickid ſpirite tolde him thus?
Now certis, eme, to morow' and I him ſe
I ſhal therof as full excuſin me
As evir did woman, if that him like,
And with that worde ſhe gan full ſore to ſike. 812

O God! (quod ſhe) ſo worldly ſelineſſe,
Whiche clerkis callin falſe felicite,
Ymedlid is with many' a bittirneſſe
Ful anguiſhous, that is, God wote, (quod ſhe)
Condicion of veine proſperite,
For eithir joyis comin nat iſere,
Or ellis no wight hath 'hem alwaie here. 819

O brotil wele of mann'is joie unſtable!
With what wight ſo thou be, or how thou playe,
Eithir he wote that thou joie art mutable,
Or wote it nate, it mote ben one of twaie:
Now if he wote it nat how maie he ſaie
That he hath very joie and ſilineſſe
That is of ignoraunce aie in derkeneſſe? 826

Now if he wote that joy is tranſitory,
(As every joie of worldly thing mote flie)
Than every time he that hath in memory
The drede of leſing makith him that he
May in no parfite ſikirneſſe ybe,
And if to leſe his joie he ſet a mite
Than ſemith it that joy is worth ful lite. 833

Wherfore I wol define in this matere,
That truily for aught I can eſpie
There is no very wele in this world here;
But o thou wickid ſerpent Jelouſie!
Thou miſbelevid, envious folie,
Why haſt thou Troilus made me to untriſt,
That nevir yet agilte him that I wiſte?
(Quod Pandarus) Thus fallin is this caas.
Why, uncle mine, (quod ſhe) who tolde him this?
And why doth my dere hertè thus, alas!
Ye wote, ye, nece min, (quod he) what it is;
I hope al ſhal be wel that is amis,
For ye maie quenche al this if that you leſt;
And doeth right ſo; I holde it for the beſt.
So ſhal I do to morow', iwis, (quod ſhe)
And God toforne, ſo that it ſhal ſuffice.
To morow, alas! that were faire (quod he.)
Nay, nay, it maie nat ſtondin in this wiſe,
For, necè mine, thus writin clerkis wiſe,
That *Peril is with dretching in ydrawe;*
Nay, ſuche abodis ben nat worthe an hawe.
Nece, allè thing hath time, I dare avowe,
For whan a chambre' a fire is or an hall,
Wel more nede is it ſodainly reſcowe
Than to diſpute and aſke amongis all
How is this candil in the ſtrawe yfall?
Ah, *benedicite!* for al among that fare
The harme is done, and farwel feldèfare.

And, necè mine, ne take it nat agreſe
If that ye ſuffre' him al night in this wo;
God helpe me ſo ye had him nevir leſe;
What dare I ſain, now there is but we two,
But wel I wote that ye wol nat ſo do,
Ye ben to wiſe to don ſo gret folie,
To put his life al night in jeopardie. 868

Had I him nevir leſe? by God I wene
Ye ne had nevir thing ſo leſe, (quod ſhe.)
Now by my thriſte (quod he) that ſhall be ſene,
For ſithe ye make this enſample of me,
If I al night would him in ſorowe ſe
For al the treſour in the toune of Troie,
I bidde God that I nevir mote have joie. 875

Now lokè than if ye that ben his love
Should put his life all night in jeopardy
For thing of nought: now by that God above
Nat onely this delaie cometh of folie
But of malice, if that I ſhould nat lie:
What! platly and ye ſuffre' him in diſtreſſe
Ye neithir bounte done ne gentilneſſe. 882

(Quod tho Creſeide) Wol ye done o thing,
And ye therwith ſhal ſtinte al his diſeſe,
Have here and berith him this blewè ring,
For there is nothing might him bettir pleſe
Save I my ſelfe, ne more his hert apeſe;
And ſaie, my derè herte! that his ſorowe
Is cauſeleſſe, that ſhal he ſene to morowe. 889

A ringe! (quod he) ye haſilwodis ſhaken!
Ye, necè mine, that ring muſt have a ſtone,
A ſtone which that might ded men alive maken,
And ſuche a ring trowe I that ye have none:
Diſcrecion out of your hed is gone,
That fele I now, (quod he) and that is routhe:
O time iloſt, wel maiſt thou curſin ſlouthe!

Wote ye not wel that noble' and hie corage
Ne foroweth nat, ne ſtintith eke for lite,
But if a fole were in a jelous rage
I n'olde ſettin at his ſorowe a mite,
But feſte him with a fewè wordis white
An othir daie, whan that I might him finde;
But this thing ſtant al in anothir kinde;

This is ſo gentle' and ſo tendir of herte
That with his deth he wol his ſorowes wreke,
For truſt it wel how ſore ſo that him ſmerte
He wol to you no jelous wordis ſpeke;
And forthy, nece, er that his hert to breke,
So ſpeke your ſelfe to him of this matere,
For with a worde ye maie his hertè ſtere.

Now have I tolde what peril he is in,
And his coming unwiſt to every wight,
Ne parde harme maie there be none ne ſin,
I wol my ſelf be with you al this night;
Ye know eke how it is your ownè knight,
And by that right ye muſt upon him triſte,
And I al preſt to fetche him when you liſte.

This accident ſo pitous was to here,
And eke ſo like a ſothe, at primè face,
And Troilus her knight, to her ſo dere,
His prive comming, and the ſikir place,
That though ſhe thought ſhe did him than a grace,
Conſidirid al thingis as thei ſtode,
No wondir is, ſens he did al for gode.

Creſeide anſwerde, As wiſely God at reſt
My ſoulè bring as me is for him wo,
And, eme, iwis faine would I don the beſt,
If that I a grace had for to do ſo;
But whethir that ye dwel or for him go
I am, til God me bettir mindè ſende,
At Dulcarnon, right at my witt'is ende.

(Quod Pandarus) Ye, necè, wol ye here,
Dulcarnon clepid is fleming of wretches,
It ſemith hard, for wretchis wol nought lere
For very ſlouthe, or othir wilfull tetches,
This ſaid is by them that ben't worth two fetches;
But yè ben wiſe, and that ye han on honde
N'is neithir harde ne ſkilful to withſtonde.

Than, eme, (quod ſhe) doeth hereof as you liſt,
But er he come I wol up firſt ariſe,
And for the love of God, ſens al my triſt
Is on you two, and ye beth bothè wiſe,
So werkith now, in ſo diſcrete a wiſe,
That I honour maie have and he pleſaunce,
For I am here al in your govirnaunce.

That is wel ſaid, (quod he) my necè dere!
There gode thriſte on that wiſè gentill herte;
But liggith ſtill, and takith him right here,
It nedith nat no ferthir for him ſterte;
And eche of you eſe othir ſorowes ſmert,
For love of God and Venus I the herie,
For ſone hope I that we ſhullin ben merie. 952

This Troilus full ſone on knees him ſette
Ful ſobrely right by her bedd'is hed,
And in his beſtè wiſe his lady grette;
But Lord! ſo ſhe woxe ſodainliche all red,
And thought anone how that ſhe ſhulde be dedde;
She couldè nat o worde aright out bringe,
So ſodainly for his ſodaine cominge. 959

But Pandarus, that ſo wel couldè fele
In every thing, to plaie anon began,
And ſayid, Nece, ſe how this lord gan knele,
Now for your trouthè ſe this gentil man;
And with that worde he for a quiſhin ran,
And ſaid, Knelith now whilis that thou leſte,
There God your hertis bring ſonè to reſte. 966

Can I naught ſain, for ſhe bad him nat riſe,
If ſorowe' it put out of her remembraunce,
Or ellis that ſhe toke it in the wiſe
Of duètie as for his obſervaunce;
But well finde I ſhe did him this pleſaunce,
That ſhe him kiſt, although ſhe ſikid ſore,
And bad him ſit adoun withoutin more. 973

(Quod Pandarus) Now wol ye well begin,
Now doth him ſittin doune, gode necè dere!
Upon your bedd'is ſide, al there within,
That eche of you the bet maie othir here;
And with that worde he drew him to the fere,
And toke a light, and found his countinaunce
As for to loke upon an old romaunce.

Creſeide, that was Troilus lady right,
And clere ſtode in a grounde of ſikirneſſe,
All thought ſhe that her ſervaunt and her knight
Ne ſhulde of trouthe none unright of her geſſe,
Yet nathèleſſe, conſidrid his diſtreſſe,
And that love is in cauſe of ſuche folie,
Thus to him ſpake ſhe of his jelouſie:

Lo, hertè mine! as would the excellence
Of love, aienſt the whiche that no man maie,
Ne ought eke godely makin reſiſtence,
And eke bicauſe I feltè wel and ſaie
Your grete trouth and ſervice evèry daie,
And that your hert al mine was, ſoth to ſaine,
This drove me for to rewe upon your paine;

And your godenes have I founden' alway yet,
Of whiche my dere hert, and al my knight!
I thanke it you, as ferre as I have wit,
Al can I nat as much as it were right;
And I emforth my conning and my might
Have, and aie ſhal, how ſore ſo that me ſmert,
Ben to you trewe and whole with all mine hert;

And dredileſſe that ſhal be founde at preve:
But, hertè mine! what al this is to ſaine
Shal well be told, ſo that ye nought you greve,
Though I to you right on your ſelf complaine,
For therewith mene I finally the paine
That halt your hert and mine in hevineſſe
Fully to ſlaine, and every wrong redreſſe.

My gode hert mine! n'ot I for why ne how
That Jelouſy, alas! that wicked wivere,
Thus cauſèleſſe is cropin into you,
The harme of whiche I would fain delivere:
Alas! that he all whole or of him ſlivere
Should have his refute in ſo digne a place!
Than Jove him ſone out of your herte erace!

But o thou Jove! o auctour of nature!
Is this an honour to thy dignite
That folke ungilty ſuffrin here injure,
And who that gilty is al quite goeth he?
O were it lefull for to plaine of the,
That undeſervid ſuffriſt jelouſie,
Of that I would upon the plaine and crie.

Eke al my wo is this, that folke now uſen
To ſaine right thus; Ye, jelouſie is love,
And would a buſhil of venim excuſen,
For that a grane of love is on it ſhove,
But that wote high Jove that ſittin above
If it be likir love, or hate, or grame,
And aftir that it ought to bere his name.

¶ But certaine is ſome manir jelouſie
Is excuſable more than ſome iwis,
As whan cauſe is and ſome ſuche fantaſie,
With pite that ſo wel expreſſid is
That it unnethis doeth or ſaith amis,
But godely drinkith up al his diſtreſſe,
And that excuſe I for the gentilneſſe. 1036

And ſome ſo ful of fury'is and diſpite
That it ſurmountith his repreſſion;
But, hertè mine! ye be nat in that plite,
That thonke I God, for whiche your paſſion
I wol nat cal it but illuſion
Of haboundaunce of love and beſy cure,
That doth your hertè this diſeſe endure; 1043

Of which I am right ſory but nat wrothe,
But for my devoir and your hert'is reſte.
Where ſo you liſt, by ordal or by othe,
By ſorte, or in what wiſe ſo that you leſte,
For love of God let preve it for the beſte,
And if that I be gilty do me die;
Alas! what might I more or done or ſeie? 1050

And tho with that a fewe bright teris newe
Out of her eyin fel, and thus ſhe ſeide;
Now God, thou woſt in thought ne dede untrewe
To Troilus was nevir yet Creſeide;
With that her hed doun in the bed ſhe leide,
And with the ſhete it wrie, and ſighid ſore,
And held her pece; nat a word ſpake ſhe more. 1057

But now helpe God to quench al this ſorow,
So hope I that he ſhal, for he beſte may,
For *I have ſene of a ful miſty morow*
Folowen ful oft a mery ſomir's day,
And *Aftir wintir foloweth grene May,*
Men ſene all day, and redin eke in ſtories,
That *Aftir ſharpe ſhouris ben victories.* 1064

This Troilus, when he her wordis herde,
Have ye no care him liſtè nat to ſlepe,
For it thought him no ſtrokis of a yerde
To here or ſe Creſeide his lady wepe,
But wel he felte about his hertè crepe,
For every tere whiche that Creſeide aſterte,
The crampe of deth to ſtraine him by the herte. 1071

And in his minde he gan the time accurſe
That he came there, and that he was yborne,
For now is wicke ytournid into worſe,
And all that labour he hath doen beforne
He wende it loſt, he thought it n'as but lorne:
O Pandarus! thought he, alas! thy wile
Servith of nought, ſo welawaie the while! 1078

And therwithall he hing adoune his hedde,
And fell on knees, and ſorowfully ſight:
What might he ſain? he felt he n'as but dedde,
For wroth was ſhe that ſhould his ſorowes light;
But natheleſſe whan that he ſpekin might
Than ſaid he thus; God wote that of this game
Whan all is wiſt than am I nat to blame. 1085

Therwith the ſorowe in hert ſo ſhet
That from his eyin fell there nat a tere,
And every ſpirite his vigour in knet,
So thei aſtonied and oppreſſid were;
The feling of his ſorowe or his fere,
Or of aught ellis, fledde were out of toune;
Adoune he fell all ſodainly in ſwoune. 1092

This was no little ſorowe for to ſe,
But all was huſh't, and Pandare up as faſt;
O necè, pece! or we be loſt (quod he;)
Bethe nat agaſt; but certain at the laſt
For this or that he into bedde him caſt,
And ſaied, O theſe! is this a mann'is herte?
And of he rent all to his barè ſherte, 1099

And ſayid, Nece, but and ye helpe us now,
Alas! your ownè Troilus is lorne.
Iwis ſo would I, and I wiſtè how,
Full ſain, (quod ſhe.) Alas that I was borne!
Ye, necè, woll ye pullin out the thorne
That ſtickith in his hertè (quod Pandare?)
Saie all foryeve, and ſtint is all this fare. 1106

Ye, that to me (quod ſhe) full levir were
Than all the gode the ſunne about ygoeth;
And therewithall ſhe ſwore him in his ere,
Iwis, my derè herte! I am not wrothe,
Have here my trouth, and many' an othir othe:
Now ſpeke to me, for it am I Creſeide:
But all for naught; yet might he not abreide. 1113

Therwith his poulce and paumis of his hondes
Thei gan to frote, and wete his templis twain,
And to delivir him fro bittir bondes
She oft him kist; and, shortly for to sain,
Him to rewakin she did all her pain;
And at the last he gan his breth to drawe,
And of his swough sone aftir that adawe, 1120

And gan bet minde and reson to him take;
But wondir sore he was abashed iwis,
And with a sigh whan he gan bet awake
He saied, O mercie, God! what thing is this?
Why doe ye with your selvin thus amis?
(Quod tho Creseide) Is this a mann'is game?
What, Troilus! woll ye doe thus for shame? 1127

And therwithall her arme ovre' him she laied,
And all foryave, and oftin time him kest:
He thonkid her, and to her spake and saied
As fill to purpose for his hert'is rest;
And she to that answerde him as her lest,
And with her godelie wordis him disport
She gan, and oft his sorowes to comfort. 1134

(Quod Pandarus) For aught I can aspien
This light nor I ne servin here of naught,
Light is nat gode for sikë folkis eyen;
But for the love of God, sens ye ben brought
In this gode plite, let now non hevy thought
Ben hangid in the hertis of you twey;
And bare the candle towardes the chimney. 1141

Sone after this, though it no nede ywere,
Whan ſhe ſoche othis as her liſt deviſe
Had of him takin, her thought tho no fere
Ne cauſe eke none to bid him thennis riſe:
Yet leſſe thing than othis maie ſuffice
In many' a caſe, for every wight I geſſe
That lovith well menith but gentilneſſe. 1148

But in effect ſhe woald ywete anon
Of what man, and eke where, and alſo why,
He jelous was, ſens there was cauſè non,
And eke the ſigne whiche that he toke it by,
She bade him that to tell her buſily,
Or ellis certain ſhe bare him on honde
That this was doen of malice, her to fonde. 1155

Withoutin morè, ſhortly for to ſain,
He muſt obeie unto his ladie's heſt,
And for the laſſe harme he muſt ſomwhat fain;
He faied her, Whan ſhe was at ſoche a feſt
She might on him have lokid at the leſt;
N'ot I nat what (all dere inough a riſhe)
As he that nedis muſt a cauſe out fiſhe. 1162

And ſhe anſwerde, Swete hert! all were it ſo,
What harme was that, ſince I non evill mene?
For by that God that wrought us bothè two
In all manir thing is mine entent clene;
Soche argumentes ne be nat worthe a bene:
Woll ye the childiſh jelous counterfete?
Now were it worthy that ye were ibete. 1169

Tho Troilus gan ſorowfully ſike,
Leſt ſhe be wrothe him thought his hertè deide,
And ſaied, Alas! upon my ſorowe's ſike
Have mercie, o ſwete hertè mine, Creſeide!
And if that in tho wordis that I ſeide
Be any wrong, I woll no more treſpace:
Doeth what you liſt; I am all in your grace. 1176

And ſhe anſwerde, Of gilt miſericorde,
That is to ſaine, that I foryeve all this,
And evirmore on this night you recorde,
And bethe well ware ye doe no more amis.
Naie, dere hert mine! no more (quod he) iwis.
And now (quod ſhe) that I have you doe ſmerte
Foryeve it to me, mine owne ſwetè herte! 1183

This Troilus with bliſſe of that ſuppriſed
Put all in Godd'is hande, as he that ment
Nothing but well, and ſodainly aviſed
He her in his armis faſt to him hent;
And Pandarus with a full gode entent
Laied him to ſlepe, and ſaied, If ye be wiſe
Sownith not now, leſt morè folke ariſe. 1190

What might or maie the ſely larkè ſaie
Whan that the ſparhauke hath him in his fote?
I can no more but of theſe ilkè twaie,
(To whom this tale ſugre be or ſote)
Though I tary a yere, ſomtime I mote
After mine auctour tellin ther gladneſſe,
As well as I have tolde ther hevineſſe. 1197

Creſeidè, whiche that felt her thus itake,
(As writin clerkis in ther bokis old)
Right as an aſpin leſe ſhe gan to quake
Whan ſhe him felt her in his armis fold;
But Troilus all whole of caris cold
Gan thankin tho the bliſfull goddis ſeven.
Thus *Sondry painis bringin folk to heven.* 1204

This Troilus in armis gan her ſtraine,
And ſayid, Swete! as evir mote I gone
Now be ye caught; now here is but we twaine;
Now yeldith you, for othir bote is none.
To that Creſeide anſwerid thus anone,
Ne had I er now, my ſwete hertè dere!
Ben yoldin, iwis I were now not here. 1211

O ſoth is ſaied, that helid for to be
Of a fevir or othir grete ſikneſſe
Men muſt drinkin, as we may oftin ſe,
Full bittir drinke, and for to have gladneſſe
Men drinkin oft in pain and in diſtreſſe;
I mene it here, as for this avinture,
That through a pain hath foundin al his cure. 1218

And now ſwetneſſe yſemith ferre more ſwete
That bittirneſſe aſſayid was biforne,
For out of wo in bliſſe now thei flete;
Non ſoche thei feltin ſithins thei were borne;
Now is this bettir than bothe two be lorne:
For love of God take every woman hede
To werkin thus if it come to the nede. 1225

Creſeide all quite from every drede and tene,
As ſhe that juſtè cauſe had him to triſt,
Made him ſoche feſt it joie was for to ſene,
Whan ſhe his trouth and clene entent ywiſt;
And as about a tre with many'a twiſt
Bitrent and writhin is the ſwete wodbinde
Gan eche of 'hem in armis othir winde. 1232

And as the newe abaſhid nightingale,
That ſtintith firſt, whan ſhe beginnith ſing,
Whan that ſhe herith any herd'is tale,
Or in the hedgis any wight ſtering,
And aftir ſikir doeth her voice out ring,
Right ſo Creſeide, whan that her drede ſtent,
Opened her hert, and told him her entent. 1239

And right as he that ſeeth his deth iſhapen,
And dyin mote, in aught that he maie geſſe,
And ſodainly reſcous doeth him eſcapen,
And from his deth is brought in ſikirneſſe,
For al this worlde in ſoche preſent gladneſſe
Was Troilus, and hath his lady ſwete:
With no worſe hap God let us nevir mete! 1246

Her armis ſmall, her back both ſtreight and ſoft,
Her ſidis long, and fleſhy, ſmothe, and white,
He gan to ſtroke, and gode thrift bad full oft,
Her ſnow-white throte, her breſtis round and lite;
Thus in this heven' he gan him to delite,
And therwithall a thouſande times her kiſt,
That what to doen for joie unneth he wiſt. 1253

Than ſaied he thus, O Love! o Charite!
Thy mothir eke, Citherea the ſwete!
Aftir thy ſelf next heryid be ſhe,
Venus I mene, the wellwilly planete,
And next that Hymenæus! I the grete,
For nevir man was to you goddis hold
As I, whiche ye have brought fro caris cold. 1260

Benignè Love! thou holy bond of thinges,
Who ſo woll grace, and liſt the not honoure,
Lo! his deſire woll flie withoutin winges,
For n'oldiſt thou of bounte 'hem ſocoure
That ſervin beſt, and moſte alwaie laboure,
Yet were all loſt, that dare I well ſain certes,
But if thy grace ypaſſid our deſertes. 1267

And for thou me, that leſt thonke coud deſerve
Of them that nombrid ben unto thy grace,
Haſt holpin there I likely was to ſterve,
And me beſtowid in ſo high a place
That thilkè boundis maie no bliſſe ſurpace,
I can no more, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thine excellence. 1274

And therwithall Creſeide anon he kiſt,
Of whiche certain ſhe ne felt no diſeſe,
And thus ſaied he, Now would to God I wiſt,
Mine hertè ſwete! how I you beſt might pleſe.
What man (quod he) was evir thus at eſe
As I, on whiche the fairiſt and the beſt
That er I ſeie deinith her hert to reſt? 1281

Here maie ye sene that mercie passith right,
The' experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to so swete a wight;
But harte mine! of your benignite
So thinkith, that though I unworthy be
Yet mote I nede amendin in some wise
Right through the vertue of your hie service.

And for the love of God, my lady dere!
Sith he hath wrought me for I shal you serve,
As thus I mene, that ye woll be my fere
To doe me live, if that you list, or sterve;
So techith me how that I maie deserve
Your thonke, so that I through min ignoraunce
Ne doe nothing that you be displesaunce:

For certis, freshe and womanlichè wife!
This dare I saie, that trouth and diligence,
That shall ye findin in me all my life,
Ne I woll not certain breke your defence,
And if I doe, present or in absence,
For love of God let slea me with the dede,
If that it like unto your womanhede.

Iwis, (quod she) mine ownè hert'is lust!
My ground of ese, and al mine hertè dere!
Graunt mercie! for on that is all my trust:
But let us fall awaie fro this mattere,
For it suffisith this that said is here,
And at o worde, withoutin repentaunce,
Welcome my knight, my pece, my suffisaunce!

Of ther delite or joies one of the leſt
Were impoſſible to my wit to ſaie,
But judgith ye that have ben at the feſt
Of ſoche gladneſſe, if that him liſt to plaie;
I can no more but thus, theſe ilkè twaie
That night, betwixin drede and ſikirneſſé,
Feltin in love the gretiſt worthineſſe. 1316

O bliſfull night! of them ſo long iſought,
How blithe unto 'hem bothè two thou were!
Why ne' had I ſoche feſt with my ſoule ibought,
Ye, or but the leſt joie which that was there?
Awaie thou foulè daungir and thou fere!
And let 'hem in this hevin bliſſe ydwell,
That is ſo high that all ne can I tell. 1323

But ſothe is, though I can not tellin all,
As can mine aucthour of his excellence,
Yet have I ſaied, and God toforne ſhall,
In every thing all wholly his ſentence,
And if that I at Lov'is reverence
Have any worde in echid for the beſt
Doeth therwithall right as your ſelvin leſt; 1330

For all my wordis here, and every part,
I ſpeke 'hem all undir correction
Of you that feling have in lov'is art,
And put it all in your diſcrecion,
To encreſe or make diminicion
Of my langage, and that I you beſeche:
But now to purpoſe of my rathir ſpeche. 1337

These ilkè two, that ben in armis last,
So lothe to 'hem asondir gon it were,
That eche from othir wendin ben birast,
Or ellis, lo! this was ther mostè fere,
That all this thing but nicè dremis were,
For whiche full oft eche of 'hem said, O swete!
Clippe I you thus, or els doe I it mete? 1344

And, Lorde! so he gan godelie on her se,
That nevir his loke ne blent from her face,
And saied, O my dere hertè! maie it be
That it be sothe that ye ben in this place?
Ye, hertè mine! God thanke I of his grace,
(Quod tho Creseide) and therwithall him kist,
That where here spirite was for joie she n'ist. 1351

This Troilus full oft her eyin two
Gan for to kisse, and saied, O eyin clere!
It werin ye that wrought me sochè wo,
Ye humble nettis of my lady dere,
Though there be mercie writtin in your chere,
God wote the text full harde is for to finde;
How couldin ye withoutin bonde me binde? 1358

Therwith he gan her fast in armis take,
And well an hundrid timis gan he sike,
Not soche sorowfull sighis as men make
For wo, or ellis whan that folke be sike,
But esie sighis, soche as ben to like,
That shewid his affection within;
Of soche manir sighis could he not blin. 1365

Sone aftir this thei ſpake of ſondrie thinges,
As fill to purpoſe of this avinture,
And playin eaterchaungidin ther ringes,
Of whiche I can not tellin no ſcripture,
But well wot a broche of gold and azure,
In whiche a rubie ſet was like an hert,
Creſeide him yave, and ſtacke it on his ſherte. 1372

Lorde! trowé ye that a coveitous wretche
That blamith love, and halte of it diſpite,
That of tho pens that he can muckre' and ketche
Was evir yet yeve to him ſoche delite,
As is in love in o poinct in ſome plite?
Naie, doubtleſſe, for all ſo God me ſave
So parfite joie ne maie no nigard have. 1379

Thei woll ſaie Yes, but Lorde that ſo thei lie!
Tho buſie wretchis full of wo and drede
That callin love a wodeneſſe or folie;
But it ſhall fall 'hem as I ſhall you rede,
Thei ſhall forgon the white and eke the rede,
And live in wo, there God yeve 'hem miſchaunce,
And every lovir in his trouthe avaunce. 1386

As would to God tho wretchis that diſpiſe
Service of love had eris all ſo long
As had Midas, all full of covetiſe,
And therto dronkin had as hotte and ſtrong
As Cyrus did for his affectis wrong,
To techin 'hem that thei ben in the vice,
And lovirs not, although thei hold 'hem nice. 1393

These ilkè two of whom that I you saie,
Whan that ther hertis well assurid were,
Tho gonnin thei to spekin and to plaie,
And eke rehercin how, and whan, and where,
Thei knewin first, and every wo or fere
That passid was; but all soche hevinesse,
Ithonkid God, was tournid to gladnesse.

And evirmore whan that 'hem fell to speke
Of any thing of soche a time agone
With kissing all that talè should ybreke,
And fallin into a newe joie anone,
And diddin all ther might, sens thei were one,
For to recoveren blisse and ben at ese,
And paisid wo with joyis counterpaise.

Reson woll not that I spekin of slepe,
For it accordith not to my mattere;
God wote thei toke of it full little kepe,
But lest this night that was to 'hem so dere
Ne should in vaine escape in no manere
It was biset in joie and businesse
Of all that sounith into gentilnesse.

But whan the cocke, commune astrologer,
Gan on his brest to bete and after crowe,
And Lucifer, the day'is messanger,
Gan for to rise, and out his bennis throwe,
And estward rose, to him that could it know,
Fortuna Major, than anone Creseide
With herte sore to Troilus thus seide:

Mine hert'is life, my trust, al my plesaunce!
That I was borne, alas! that me is wo,
That daie of us mote make disceveraunce,
For time it is to rise and hennis go,
Or ellis I am lost for evirmo.
O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou ore us hove
As long as whan Alcmena laie by Jove? 1428

O blackè Night! as folke in bokis rede,
That shapin art by God this worlde to hide
At certain timis with thy derkè wede,
That undir that men might in rest abide,
Wel oughtin bestes to plain and folke to chide,
That thereas daie with labor would us brest,
That thou us fliest and deinist us not rest. 1435

Thou doest, alas! so shortly thine office,
Thou rakle Night, that God makir of kinde
The for thine hast, and thine unkindè vice
So fast aie to our hemispherè binde,
That nevirmore undir the ground thou winde,
For through thy rakle hying out of Troie
Have I forgone thus hastily my joie. 1442

This Troilus, that with tho wordis felt,
As thought him tho, for piteous distresse
The blodie teris from his hertè melt,
As he that yet nevir soche hevinesse
Assayid had out of so grete gladnesse,
Gan therewithall Creseide his lady dere
In armis strain, and said in this manere: 1449

O cruill Daie! accuſer of the joie
That Night and Love hath ſtole and faſt iwrie,
Accurſid be thy comming into Troie!
For every bowre hath one of thy bright eyen:
Envious Daie! what liſt the ſo to ſpien?
What haſt thou loſt? why ſekiſt thou this place?
There God thy light ſo queuchè for his grace!

Alas! what have theſe lovirs the agilt?
Diſpitous Daie! thine be the paine of hell,
For many' a lovir haſt thou ſlain and wilt;
Thy poring in woll no where let 'hem dwell:
What! profriſt thou thy light here for to ſel?
Go, ſell it them that ſmalè ſelis grave;
We woll the not; us nedith no daie have.

And eke the ſonnè Titan gan he chide,
And ſaid, O fole! well maie men the diſpiſe,
That haſt all night the Dauning by thy ſide,
And ſuffriſt her ſo ſone up fro the riſe,
For to diſeſe us lovirs in this wiſe;
What? hold your bed there thou and thy Morow;
I biddè God ſo yeve you both ſorowe.

Therwith full ſore he ſighed, and thus he ſeide:
My lady bright, and of my wele or wo
The well and rote! o godely mine, Creſeide!
And ſhall I riſe, alas! and ſhall I goe?
Now fele I that mine hertè mote a two;
And how ſhould I my life an hourè ſave
Sens that with you is all the life I have?

What ſhall I doen? for certis I n'ot how,
Ne whan, alas! I ſhall the timè ſe
That in this plite I maie ben eft with you,
And of my life God wote how ſhall that be,
Sens that deſire right now ſo bitith me
That I am dede anon but I retourne:
How ſhould I long, alas! fro you ſojourne?

But nathèleſſe, mine ownè ladie bright!
Yet were it ſo that I wiſt uttirly
That I your humble ſervaunt and your knight
Were in your herte iſet ſo fermily
As ye in mine, the whiche thing truily
Me levir were than have theſe worldis twain,
Yet ſhould I bet endurin all my pain.

To that Creſeide anſwerid right anon,
And with a ſigh ſhe ſaied, O herte dere!
The game iwis ſo ferforth now is gon
That firſt ſhall Phœbus fallin from the ſphere,
And everiche egle ben the dov'is fere,
And every rocke out of his place aſterte,
Er Troilus go out of Creſeide's herte.

Ye ben ſo depe within mine herte ygrave,
That tho I would it turne out of my thought,
As wiſely very God my ſoulè ſave,
To dyin in the pain I couldè nought;
And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,
Let in your brain none othir fantaſie
So crepin, that it cauſè me to die.

And that ye me would have as fast in minde
As I have you, that would I you beseche,
And if I wist sothily that to finde,
God might not o point of my joyis eche.
But, hertè mine! withoutin morè speche,
Bethe to me true, or ellis were it routhe,
For I am thine, by God and by my trouthe.

Bethe glad forthy, and live in sikirnesse,
Thus saied I ner er this, ne shall to mo;
And if to you it were a grete gladnesse
To tourne ayen sone aftir that ye go,
As faine would I as ye that it were so,
As wisely God mine hertè bring to reste,
And him in armis toke, and oftè keste.

Ayenst his will, sithe it mote nedis be,
This Troilus up rose, and fast him cled,
And in his armis toke his lady fre
An hundrid times, and on his waie him sped,
And with soche wordis as his herte ybled
He seidè, Farith wel, my dere herte swete!
That God us grauntè sound and sone to mete.

To whiche no worde for sorowe she answerd,
So sore gan his parting her to distrain,
And Troilus unto his paleis ferd,
As wo bigon as she was, sothe to saine,
So harde him wrong of sharpe desire the pain;
For to ben efte there he was in plesaunce,
That it may nere out of his remembraunce.

Retournid to his roiall palais sone
He soft unto his bedde gan for to shrinke,
To slepè long, as he was wont to doen;
But all for naught; he maie wel ligge and winke,
But slepe maie there none in his hertè sinke,
Thinking how she, for whom desire him brende,
A M. folde was worth more than he wende. 1540

And in his thought gan up and doune to wende
Her wordis all, and every countinaunce,
And fermily impressin in his minde
The lestè poincte that to him was plesaunce,
And verily of thilkè remembraunce
Desire al newe him brende, and lust to brede
Gan more than erst, and yet toke he non hede. 1547

Creseide also right in the samè wise
Of Troilus gan in her hertè shet,
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedis wise,
His gentilnesse, and how she with him met,
Thonking Love that he so well her beset,
Desiring oft to have her hertè dere
In soche a place as she durst make him chere. 1554

Pandare a morowe which that commin was
Unto his necè gan her faire to grete,
And saied, All this night so rained it alas!
That all my drede is that ye, necè swete!
Have little leisir had to slepe and mete:
All night (quod he) hath rain so do me wake
That some of us I trowe ther heddis ake. 1561

And nere he came, and said, How ſtant it now,
This merie morowe? nece, how can ye fare?
Creſeide anſwerde, Nevir the bet for you,
Foxe that ye ben, God yeve your hertè care;
God helpe me ſo ye cauſid all this fare,
Trowe I, (quod ſhe) for all your wordis white:
O who ſo ſeeth you knowith you full lite! 1568

With that ſhe began her face for to wrie
With the ſhetè, and woxe for ſhame all redde,
And Pandarus gan undir for to prie,
And ſayid, Nece, if that I ſhall ben dedde
Have here a ſwerde and ſmitith of my hedde:
With that his arme all ſodainly he thriſte
Undir her necke, and at the laſt her kiſte. 1575

I paſſe al that, which chargith naught to ſay:
What! God foryave his deth, and ſhe alſo
Foryave; and with her uncle gan to plaie,
For othir cauſe ne was there none than ſo:
But of this thing right to th' effect to go,
Whan time ywas home to her houſe ſhe went,
And Pandarus hath fully his entent. 1582

Now tournè we ayen to Troilus,
That reſtèleſſe full long a bedde ylaie,
And privily ſent aftir Pandarus,
To him to come in all the haſt he maie:
He come anon, not onis ſaied he naie,
And Troilus full ſobirly he grete,
And doune upon the bedd'is ſide him ſete. 1589

This Troilus with all th' affectioun
Of frendly love that hertè maie devise
To Pandarus on kneis fill adoune,
And er that he would of the place arise
He gan him thankin on his bestè wise;
An hundrid time he gan the timè blesse
That he was borne, to bring him fro distresse. 1596

He said, O frend of frendes! the aldirbest
That evir was, the sothe for to tell,
Thou hast in heven ibrought my soule at rest
Fro Phlegethon, the firie flode of hell,
That though I might a thousande timis sel
Upon a daie my life in thy service
It ne might not a mote in that suffice. 1603

The sonnè, whiche that al the worlde maie se,
Sawe nevir yet (my life that dare I leie)
So joily, faire, and godely, as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I deie;
And that I thus am her's, dare I wel seie,
That thankid be the highè worthinesse
Of Love, and eke thy kindè businesse. 1610

Thus hast thou me no little thing iyeve;
For why? to the obligid be for aie
My life; and why? for through thine helpe I live,
Or els dedde had I ben many a daie:
And with that worde doun in his bed he laie,
And Pandarus full sobirly him herde
Till all was said, and than he him answerde: 1617

My derè frende! if I have doen for the
In any case, God wote it is me lese,
And am as glad as man maie of it be,
God helpe me so; but take now not agrefe
That I shall saine; beware of this mischefe,
That there as now thou brought art to thy blisse
That thou thy self ne cause it not to misse: 1624

For of Fortun'is sharpe adversite
The worstè kinde of infortune is this,
A man to have ben in prosperite,
And it remembir whan it passid is:
Thou' art wise inough, forthy doe nat amis;
Be not to rakill though thou sittè warme,
For if thou be certain it woll the harme. 1631

Thou art at ese, and hold the well therin,
For all so sure as redde is every fire
As grete a crafte is to kepe well as winne:
Bridle alwaie thy speech and thy desire,
For *Worldly joie holdeth not but by a wire,*
That previth well, it brest al daie so ofte,
Forthy nede is to werkin with it softe. 1638

(Quod Troilus) I hope, and God toforne,
My derè frende! that I shall so me bere
That in my gilt ther shal nothing ben lorne,
Ne I n'ill rakle for to grevin her;
It nedith not this mattir ofte to tere,
For wistist thou mine hertè wel, Pandare,
God wote of this thou wouldist litil care. 1645

Tho gan he tell him of his gladè night,
And whereof first his hert ydradde and how,
And sayid, Frende, as I am a true knight,
And by that faithe I owe to God and you,
I had it nevir halfe so hote as now,
And evir the more that desire me biteth
To love her best the more it me deliteth. 1652

I n'ot my self not wisely what it is,
But now I felin a newe qualite,
Ye, all anothir than I did er this.
Pandare answerid and saied thus, that he
That onis maie in hevin blisse ybe
He felith othir wayis, dare I saie,
Than thilkè time he first herd of it saie. 1659

This is a worde for al, that Troilus
Was nevir ful to speke of this matere,
And for to praisin unto Pandarus
The bounte of his bright lady so dere,
And Pandarus to thanke and makin chere:
This tale was aie span newe to beginne
Til that the night departid 'hem atwinne. 1666

Sone after this, for that Fortune it would,
Icomin was the blisful timè swete
That Troilus was warnid that he should
There he was erst Creseide his lady mete,
For whiche he felte his herte in joiè flete,
And faithfully gan all the goddis hery;
And let se now if that he can be mery. 1673

And holdin was the forme and al the gise
Of her comming, and eke of his also,
As it was erst, whiche nedith nought devise;
But plainly to th' effecte right for to go,
In joie and surete Pandarus 'hem two
A bedde ybrought whan that 'hem bothè lest,
And thus thei ben in quiete and in rest. 1680

Naught nedith it to you, sithe thei ben met,
To aske at me if that thei blithe ywere?
For if it erst was well tho was it bet
A thousande folde, this nedith not enquere;
Ago was every sorow' and every fere,
And bothe iwis thei had, and so thei wende,
As mochil joie as herte maie comprehende. 1687

This n'is no litil thing of for to sey,
This passith every wit for to devise,
For eche of 'hem gan othir's lust obey;
Felicite, whiche that these clerkis wise
Commendin so, ne may not here suffise;
This joye ne maie not writtin be with inke;
This passith al that any hert maie thinke. 1694

But cruil day, so welaway the stounde!
Gan for to' aproche, as thei by signis knewe,
For whiche 'hem thought thei felin deth'is wounde:
So wo was 'hem that chaungin gan ther hewe,
And day thei gonnin to dispise al newe,
Calling it traitour, envious, and worse,
And bittirly the day'is light thei corse. 1701

(Quod Troilus) Alas! now am I ware
That Pyrois, and tho ſwifte ſtedis thre
Whiche that ydrawin forth the Sunn'is chare
Han gon ſome bypathe in diſpite of me,
And makith it ſo ſonè day to be,
And for the Sunne him haſtith thus to riſe
Ne ſhal I nevir don him ſacriſiſe.

But nedis daie departin 'hem muſt ſone;
And whan ther ſpechè don was and ther chere
Thei twin anon, as thei were wont to done,
And ſettin time of meting efte iſere,
And many' a night thei wrought in this manere:
And thus Fortune a time yladde in joie
Creſeide and eke this king'is ſon of Troie.

In ſuffiſaunce, in bliſſe, and in ſinginges,
This Troilus gan al his life to lede;
He ſpendith, juſtith, and makith feſtinges;
He gevith frely ofte, and chaungith wede;
He helde about him alwaie out of drede
A world of folke, as come him well of kinde,
The freſhiſt and the beſt that he could finde.

That ſuche a voice was of him and a ſteven
Throughout the world of honour and largeſſe
That it up ronge unto the yate of heven;
And as in love he was in ſuche gladneſſe
That in his hert he demid as I geſſe
That there n'is lovir in this world at eſe
So wel as he, and thus gan love him pleſe.

The godelihede or beaute whiche that Kinde
In any othir lady had isette
Can not the mountenaunce of a gnat unbinde
About his hert of al Creseid'is nette;
He was so narowe' imaskid and iknette
That is undon in any manir side
That n'il nat ben for aught that maie betide. 1736

And by the honde ful oftin he would take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,
And suche a fest and suche a processe make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede,
And of her beaute, that withoutin drede
It was an heven his wordis for to here,
And than he wouldè sing in this manere: 1743

Love, that of erthe and se hath govirnaunce,
Love, that his hestis hath in hevin hie,
Love, that with a right wholsome aliaunce
Halte peple joynid as him liste 'hem gie,
Love, that yknittith lawe and companie,
And couplis doth in vertue for to dwel,
Binde this accorde that I have tolde and tel. 1750

That that the world with faith, whiche that is stable,
Diversith so his stoundis according,
That elementis that bethe discordable
Holdin a bonde perpetually during,
That Phœbus mote his rosy day forth bring,
And that the mone hath lordship ore the nightes,
Al this doeth Love; aie heried be his mightes! 1757

That that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
Constrainith to a certaine endè so
His flodis, that so fiersly thei ne growen
To drenchin erthe and al for evirmo,
And if that Love aught let his bridil go
Al that now lovith asondir should lepè,
And lost were al that Love halt nowe to hepe.

So would to God, that authour is of kinde,
That with his bonde Love of his vertue list
To serchin hertis al, and fast to binde,
That from his bonde no wight the wey out wist,
And hertis colde them wold I that he twist
To make 'hem love, and that list him aie rewe
On hertis sore, and kepe 'hem that ben trewe.

In allè nedis for the toun'is werre
He was, and aie the first in armis dight,
And certainly, but if that bokis erre,
Save Hector most idradde of any wight;
And this encrese of hardinesse and might
Come him of love, his ladies thanke to win,
That altirid his spirite so within.

In time of truce on hauking would he ride,
Or ellis hunt the bore, beare, or lioun,
The smalè bestis let he gon beside;
And whan that he come riding into' the toun
Ful oft his lady from her window doun,
As fresh as faucon comin out of mue,
Ful redy was him godely to salue.

And most of love and vertue was his speche,
And in dispite had he al wretchidnesse;
And doutlesse no nede was him to beseche
To honourin them that had worthinesse,
And esin 'hem that werin in distresse;
And glad was he if any wight wel ferde
That lovir was whan he it wist or herde. 1792

For, sothe to saine, he lost helde every wight
But if he were in Lov'is high service,
I menè folke that aught it ben of right;
And ore al this so wel coulde he devise
Of sentiment, and in so uncouthe wise
Al his array, that every lovir thought
That al was well what so he said or wrought. 1799

And though that he be come of blode royal
Him list of pride at no wight for to chace;
Benigne he was to eche in general,
For which he gate him thanke in every place:
Thus wouldè Love, iheried be his grace!
That pride and ire, envie and avarice,
He gan to flie, and every othir vice. 1806

Thou lady bright, the doughtir of Dione!
Thy blinde and wingid sonne eke, Dan Cupide!
Ye Sustrin Nine eke! that by Helicone
In hil Parnasso listin for to' abide,
That ye thus fefre han deinid me to gide
I can no more, but sens that ye wol wende
Ye heried ben for aie withoutin ende! 1813

Through you have I said fully in my song
Th' effecte and joie of Troilus service,
Al be that there was some disese among,
As mine auctour to listith to devise:
My Thirdè Boke now ende I in this wise,
And Troilus in luste and in quiete
Is with Creseidè, his owne ladie swete.

Explicit liber tertius.

PROŒMIUM LIBRI QUARTI.

But all to litill, welaway the while!
Lastith suche joie, ithonkid be Fortune,
That semith trewist whan she wol begile,
And can to folis so her songe entune
That she 'hem hent and blent, traitour commune,
And whan a wight is from her whele ithrowe
Than laughith she, and makith him the mowe.

From Troilus she gan her brightè face
Away to writhe, and toke of him non hede,
And caste him clene out of his ladie's grace,
And on her whele she set up Diomede,
For which min hert right now ginnith to blede;
And now my pen, alas! with which I write,
Quakith for drede of that I must endite:

For how Creseidè Troilus forsoke,
Or at the left how that she was unkinde,
Mote hennisforthe ben matir of my Boke,
As writin folke through which it is in minde:
Alas! that thei should evir causè finde
To speke her harme! and if thei on her lie
Iwis them selfe should have the vilanie.

O ye Erinnyes! Night'is doughtirs thre,
That endèlesse complaine evir in paine,
Megæra, Alecto, and Tysiphone,
Thou cruil Mars eke! fathir of Quirine,
This ilke Fourth Boke helpith me for to fine,
So that the loos of love and life ifere
Of Troilus be fully shewid here.

INCIPIT LIBER QUARTUS.

Lygging in host, as I have saide er this,
The Grekis strong aboutin Troiè toune,
Bifell that whan that Phœbus shining is
Upon the breste of Hercules Lioun
That Hector with many a bold baroun
Cast on a daie with Grekis for to fight,
As he was wont, to greve 'hem what he might.

N'ot I how long or short it was bitwene
This purpose and that day thei fightin mente;
But on a daie wel armid bright and shene
Hector and many' a worthy knight out wente
With spere in honde, and with bigge bowis bente,
And in the berde, withoutin lengir lette,
Ther fomen in the felde anon 'hem mette.

The longè day with ſperis ſharpe igrounde,
With arowes, dartis, ſwerdes, and macis fel,
Thei fight, and bringin horſe and man to grounde,
And with ther axis out the brainis quel;
But in the laſt ſhoure, the ſothe for to tel,
The folke of Troie 'hem ſelvin ſo miſleden
That with the worſe at night homeward thei fleden.

At whichè day was takin Antenor,
Polydamas, and alſo Meneſtes,
Xantippe, Sarpedon, Polyſtenor,
Polite, or the Trojan, Dan Ruphes,
And othir leſſè folk, as Phebuſes,
So that for harme that daie the folke of Troie
Dredin to leſe a grete parte of ther joie.

Of Priamus was yeve, at Grekes requeſt,
A time of truce, and tho thei gonnin trete
Ther priſoners to chaungin moſt and leſt,
And for the ſurplus yevin ſommis grete;
This thing anon was couthe in every ſtrete,
Bothe in th' aſſege, in toun, and every where,
And with the firſt it came to Calchas ere.

When Calchas knew this tretiſe ſhould yholde,
In conſiſtorie' amonge the Grekis ſone
He gan in thringe forthe with the lordis olde,
And ſet him there as he was wont to done,
And with a chaungid face 'hem bade a bone,
For love of God, to done that reverence
To ſtintin noiſe, and yeve him audience.

Than ſaid he thus, Lo! Lordis mine, I was
Troyan, as it is knowin out of drede,
And if that you remembre' I'am Calchas,
That aldirfirſt yave comfort to your nede,
And toldè wel howe that you ſhouldin ſpede,
For dredèleſſe through you ſhal in a ſtounde
Ben Troie ibrent, and betin doun to grounde. 77

And in what forme or in what manir wiſe
This toun to ſhende, and al your luſt atcheve,
Ye have er this wel herde me you deviſe;
This knowin ye, my Lordis, as I leve,
And for the Grekis werin me ſo leve,
I came my ſelfe in my propir perſone
To teche in this how you was beſt to done. 84

Having unto my treſour ne my rent
Right no regarde in reſpecte of your eſe,
Thus al my gode I lefte and to you went,
Wening in this you, Lordis, for to pleſe;
But al that loſſe ne doth me no diſeſe;
I vouchſafe do, as wiſely have I joie,
For you to leſe al that I have in Troie, 91

Save of a doughtir that I lefte, alas!
Sleping at home when out of Troie I ſtert:
O ſterne, o cruil, fathir that I was!
Howe might I have in that ſo hard an hert?
Alas that I ne' had brought her in my ſhert!
For ſorow' of which I wol nat live to morow
But if ye, Lordis, rewe upon my ſorow. 98

For bicause that I sawe no time er now
Her to delivre' I holdin have my pees,
But now or nevir, if that it like you,
I may her have right sonè nowe doutlees:
O helpe and grace amongis al this prees!
Rewe on this oldè catife in distresse,
Sith I through you have all this hevinesse.

Ye have now caught and fettrid in prison
Troyans inowe, and if your willis be
My childe with one may have redemption;
Now for the love of God and of bounte
One of so fele, alas! so yefe him me:
What nede were it this prayir for to werne,
Sith ye shul have both folke and toun as yern?

On peril of my life I shal nat lie,
Apollo hath me tolde ful faithfully;
I have eke foundin by astronomy,
By sort, and eke by augury, trewely,
And dare wel saie the time is fastè by
That fire and flambe on all the toun shal sprede,
And thus shal Troie yturne to ashin dede.

For certaine Phœbus and Neptunus bothe,
That makidin the wallis of the toun,
Ben with the folke of Troie alwaie so wroth
That thei wol bring it to confusioun;
Right in dispite of King Laomedoun,
Bicause he n'oldè payin 'hem ther hire,
The toun of Troiè shal ben set on fire.

Telling his tale alway this oldè grey,
Humble in ſpeche and in his loking eke,
The ſaltè teris from his eyin twey
Ful faſt yronnin doun by eithir cheke;
So long he gan of ſocour 'hem beſeke
That for to hele him of his ſorowes ſore
Thei gave him Antenor withoutin more.

But who was glad inough but Calchas tho?
And of this thing ful ſone his nedis leide
On them that ſhouldin for the tretiſe go,
And them for Antenor ful oftè preide
To bringin home King Thoas and Creſeide;
And whan Priam his ſafe conduct ſent,
Th' embaſſadours to Troie ſtreight thei went.

The cauſe i-tolde of ther comming, the olde
Priam the King ful ſone in generall
Gan hereupon his parliment to holde,
Of whiche th' effecte rehercin you I ſhall:
Th' embaſſadours ben anſwerde for finall
The eſchaunge of priſoners and al this nede
'Hem likith wel, and forth in thei procede.

This Troilus was preſent in the place
Whan aſkid was for Antenor Creſeide,
For whiche ful ſone to chaungin gan his face,
As he that with tho wordis wel nigh deide;
But nathèleſſe he no worde to it ſeide,
Leſt men ſhould his affection eſpie;
With mann'is hert he gan his ſorowes drie.

And ful of anguish and of gresly drede
Abode what othir lordes would to it sey,
And if that thei would graunt, as God forbede!
Th' eschaunge of her; then thought he thingis twey,
First how to save her honor, and what wey
He mightè best th' eschaunge of her withstonde;
Ful fast he cast how allè this might stonde. 161

Love him made allè prest to done her bide,
And rathir dyin than that she should go,
But Reason said him on that othir side
Withoutin assent of her do nat so,
Lest for thy werkè she would be thy foe,
And sain, that through thy medling is iblowe
Your bothè love ther it was erst not knowe. 168

For whiche he gan deliberen for the beste,
And though the lordis wouldin that she went
He wouldè suffir them graunt what 'hem lest,
And tel his lady first what that thei ment;
And when that she had said him her entent,
Theraftir would he werkin all so blive
Tho al the world ayen it would ystrive. 175

Hector with that full wel the Grekis herde
For Antenor how thei would have Creseide,
Gan it withstonde, and sobirly answerde;
Sirs, she ne is no prisoner (he seide;)
I n'ot on you who that this chargè leide,
But on my parte ye maie estsones 'hem tell
We usin here no women for to sell. 182

The noiſe of peple upſtert then atones
As brimme as blaſe of ſtrawe iſet on fire,
For infortune it wouldè for the nones
Thei ſhouldin ther confuſion deſire.
Hector, (quod thei) what goſt may you enſpire
This woman thus to ſhilde, and done us leſe
Dan Antenor? a wrong waie now ye cheſe 189

That is ſo wiſe, and eke ſo bolde baroun,
And we have nede of folke, as men may ſe;
He is one of the gretiſt of this toun:
O Hector! lette ſuche thy fantaſies be;
O King Priam! (quod thei) thus ſeggè we,
That all our voice is to forgone Creſeide,
And to delivir Antenor thei preide. 196

O Juvenal, Lorde! trewe is thy ſentence,
That litil wenin folke what is to yerne,
That thei ne findin' in ther deſire offence,
For cloude of errour ne lette 'hem diſcerne
What beſt is; and lo! here enſample' as yerne;
Theſe folke deſirin now deliviraunce
Of Antenor, that brought 'hem to miſchaunce: 203

For he was aftir traitour to the toune
Of Troy, alas! thei quitte him out to rathe:
O nicè world, lo thy diſcrecion!
Creſeidè, which that nevir did 'hem ſcathe,
Shal nowe no lengir in her bliſſè bathe,
But Antenor he ſhal come home to toune,
And ſhe ſhal out: thus ſaid both heere and houne. 210

For which delibered was by parliment
For Antenor to yeldin out Creſeide,
And it pronouncid by the Preſident,
Although that Hector nay ful oftè praide;
And finally, what wight that it withſaide
It was for naught; it muſt yben and ſhould,
For ſubſtaunce of the parliment it would.

Departid out o' th' parliment echone,
This Troilus, withoutin wordis mo,
Unto his chambre ſpedde him faſt alone,
But if it were a man of his or two,
The whiche he bad out faſtè for to go,
Bicauſe that he would ſlepin, as he ſaide,
And haſtily upon his bedde him laide.

And as in wintir levis ben birafte
Eche aftir othir til the trees be bare,
So that there n'is but barke and braunche ilafte,
Lithe Troilus biraft of eche welfare,
Iboundin in the blackè barke of care,
Diſpoſid wode out of his witte to breide,
So ſore him ſate the chaunging of Creſeide.

He riſt him up and every dore he ſhette
And window eke, and tho this wofull man
Upon his bedd'is ſide adoune him ſette,
Ful like a ded image, both pale and wan,
And in his breſt the hepid wo began
Out bruſt, and he to workin in this wiſe,
In his wodeneſſe, as I ſhal you deviſe.

Right as the wildè bulle beginnith ſpring
Now here now there, idartid to the herte,
And of his deth rorith in complaining,
Right ſo gan he about the chambre ſterte,
Smiting his breſt aie with his fiſtis ſmerte;
His hed to the' wall, his body to the grounde,
Ful ofte he ſwapte, him ſelvin to confounde. 245

His eyin two for pite of his herte
Out ſtremidin as ſwifte as wellis twey;
The highè ſobbis of his ſorowes ſmerte
His ſpeche him refte; unnethis might he ſey
O Deth, alas! why n'ilt thou do me dey?
Acurſid be that day which that Nature
Yſhope me to ben a liv'is creture! 252

But aftir, whan the fury' and al the rage
Whiche that his hertè twiſt and faſtè threſt
By length of timè ſomewhat gan aſwage,
Upon his bedde he laide him doun to reſt;
But tho begon his teres more out to breſt,
That wondir is the body maie ſuffiſe
To halfe this wo whiche that I you deviſe. 259

Than ſaide he thus; Fortune, alas the while!
What have I done? what have I the agilt?
How mightiſt thou for routhe thus me begile?
Is there no grace? and ſhal I thus be-ſpilt?
Shal thus Creſeide away for that thou wilt?
Alas! how mightiſt thou in thine hert finde
To ben to me thus cruil and unkinde? 266

Have I the nat honourid al my live,
As thou well woteſt, above the goddis all?
Why wilt thou then of this joie me deprive?
O Troilus! what may men now the call
But wretche of wretchis, out of honour fal
Into miſe'ry? in whiche I wol bewaile
Creſeide, alas! til that the brethe me faile.

Alas, Fortune! if that my life in joie
Diſpleſid had unto thy foule envie,
Why ne' haddiſt thou my fathir King of Troy
Biraſte the life, or done my brethrin die,
Or ſlaine my ſelfe, that thus complaine and crie?
I combre world that maie of nothing ſerve,
But evir die and nevir fully ſterve.

If that Creſeide alone werin me laſte
Naught raught I whidir thou woldiſt me ſtere,
And her, alas! than haſt thou me biraſte:
But evirmore, lo! this is thy manere,
To reve a wight that moſte is to him dere,
To preve in that thy gierfull violence;
Thus am I loſt, there helpith no defence.

O very Lorde! o Love, o god! alas!
That knowiſt beſt min hert and al my thought,
What ſhal my ſoroufull life done in this caas
If I forgo that I ſo dere have bought?
Sens ye Creſeide and me have fully brought
Into your grace, and both our hertis ſeled,
How maie ye ſuffre', alas! it be repeled?

What I may done I ſhal, while I may dure
On live, in turment and in cruill paine;
This infortune and this diſaventure
Alone as I was borne I wol complaine,
Ne nevir wol I ſene it ſhine or raine,
But ende I wol as Edippe in derkneſſe
My wofull life, and dyin in diſtreſſe.

O wery goſt! that erriſt to and fro,
Why n'ilt thou flien out of the wofulleſt
Body that evir might on grounde ygo?
O ſoulè! lurking in this woful neſte,
Flee forth anon, and do mine herte to breſte,
And folowe Creſeidè thy lady dere;
Thy right place is no lengir to ben here.

O woful eyin two! ſens your diſporte
Was al to ſene Creſeid's eyin bright,
What ſhal ye done, but for my diſcomforte
Stondin for naught and wepin out your ſight,
Sens ſhe is queint that wont was you to light?
In veine from this forth have I eyin twey
Iformid, ſens your vertue is awey.

O my Creſeide! o lady ſoveraine!
Of this ſorowfull ſoulè that thus crieth
Who ſhal now yevin comfort to thy paine?
Alas! no wight; but whan mine hert ydieth
My ſpirite, whiche that ſo unto you hieth,
Receve in gre, for that ſhall aie you ſerve;
Forthy no force is though the body ſterve.

O ye lovirs! that high upon the whele
Ben sette of Fortune, in gode avinture
God lene that ye aie findin love of stele,
And longè mote your life in joy endure,
But when ye comin by my sepulture
Remembrith that your felowe restith there,
For I loved eke, though I unworthy were. 329

O oldè unwholsome and mislivid man,
Calchas I mene! alas! what eilid the
To ben a Greke sens thou art borne Trojan?
O Calchas! whiche that wolt my banè be,
In cursid timè was thou borne for me;
As wouldè blisfull Jovè for his joye
That I the had where that I would in Troie! 336

A thousande sighis hottir than the glede
Out of his brest eche aftir othir wente,
Medlid with plaintis newe, his wo to fede,
For whiche his woful teris nevir stente;
And, shortly, so his sorowes him to rente,
He woxe so mate that ne joy nor penaunce
He felith none, but lyith in a traunce. 343

Pandarus, whiche that in the parliment
Had herde what every lord and burgeis seid,
And how ful grauntid was by one assent
For Antenor to yeldin out Creseide,
Gan wel nigh wode out of his wit to breide,
So that for wo he ne wist what he mente,
But in a rage to Troilus he wente. 350

A certaine knight that for the timè kepte
The chambre dore undid it him anone,
And Pandarus, that ful tendirly wepte,
Into the derke chambre as ſtil as ſtone
Towarde the bedde gan ſoftly for to gone,
So confuſe that he ne wiſt what to ſay;
For very wo his witte was nigh away. 357

And with his chere and loking al to torne
For wo of this, and with his armis ſolden,
He ſtode this woful Troilus beforne,
And on his pitous face he gan beholden;
But Lord! ſo oftin gan his hert to colden,
Seyng his frende in wo, whoſe hevineſſe
His hertè ſlough, as thought him, for diſtreſſe. 364

This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte
His frende Pandare icomin him to ſe,
Gan as the ſnow ayenſt the ſunne to melte,
For whiche this woful Pandare of pite
Gan for to wepe as tendirly as he;
And ſpechèleſſe thus ben theſe ilkè twey,
That neithir might for ſorow o worde ſey. 371

But at the laſt this wofull Troilus,
Nigh ded for ſmert, gan breſtin out to rore,
And with a ſorowful noiſe he ſaid thus
Amonges his ſobbis and his ſighis ſore;
Lo! Pandare, I am ded, withoutin more;
Haſt thou nat herde at parliment, he ſeide,
For Antenor how loſte is my Creſeide? 378

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answerid, and saide Yes,
As wisely were it false as it is trewe
That I have herde, and wote al how it is!
O mercy, God! who would have trowid this?
Who would have wende that in so lite a throw
Fortune our joye would havin ovirthrow?

For o! in this world there is no creture,
As to my dome, that evir sawe ruine
Straungir then this through case or avinture;
But who may al eschue or al devine?
Suche is this world. Forthy I thus define,
Ne trustith no wight to finde in Fortune
Aie propertie; her yestis ben commune.

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad,
To sorowen thus why liste thou in this wise,
Sens thy desire al wholly hast thou had,
So that by right it ought inough suffice?
But I, that nevir felte in my service
A frendly chere or loking of an eye,
Let me thus wepe and wailin til I dye.

And ore al this, as thou wel wost thy selve,
This toune is ful of ladies al aboute,
And to my dome fairir than suchè twelve
As er she was shall I finde in a route,
Ye, one or twey, withoutin any doute:
Forthy be glade, mine ownè derè brother!
If she be lost we shal recovre' an other.

What! God forbid alway that eche pleſaunce
In o thing were, and in non othir wight;
If one can ſinge anothir can wel daunce,
If this be godely ſhe is glad and light,
And this is faire and that can gode aright;
Eche for his vertue holdin is full dere
Bothe heroner and faucon for rivere.

And eke, as writ Zanſis, that was full wiſe,
The newè love out chaſith oft the old,
And upon newe caſe lyith newe aviſe;
Thinke eke thy ſelf to ſavin thou art hold;
Soche fire by proceſſe ſhall of kindè cold,
For ſens it is but caſuell pleſaunce
Some caſe ſhal put it out of remembraunce.

For all ſo ſure as daie cometh aftir night
The newè love, labour, or othir wo,
Or ellis ſeldè ſeing of a wight,
Doen old affections all ovir go;
And for thy part thou ſhalt have one of tho
To abredge with thy bittir painis ſmerte;
Abſence of her ſhall drive her out of herte.

Theſe wordis ſaied he for the nonis all
To helpe his frende, leſt he for ſorowe deide,
For doubtèleſſe to doen his wo to fall
He ne raught nat what unthrift that he ſeide;
But Troilus, that nigh for ſorowe deide,
Toke little hede of all that ere he ment;
One ere it herd, at the' othir out it went.

But at the laſt he anſwerde, and ſaid, Frend,
This lechcraft, or yhelid thus to be,
Were well ſitting if that I were a fend,
To traiſin her that true is unto me;
I praie God let this counſaile nevir the,
But doe me rathir ſterve anon right here
Er I thus doen as thou me wouldiſt lere.

She that I ſerve iwis, what ſo thou ſeie,
To whom mine herte enhabite is by right,
Shall have me wholly her's till that I deie;
For, Pandarus, ſens I have trouth her hight
I woll nat ben untrue for any wight,
But as her man I woll aie live and ſterve,
And nevir wolle non othir creture ſerve.

And there thou ſaieſt thou ſhalt as faire yfind
As ſhe, let be; make no compariſon
To a creture iformid here by Kinde;
O leve, Pandarus! thy concluſion;
I woll nat ben of thine opinion
Touching all this, for whiche I the beſeche
So holde thy pece; thou ſlaeſt me with thy ſpeche.

Thou biddiſt me that I ſhould love another
All freſhly newe, and let Creſeidè go;
It lithe nat in my powir, levè brother,
And though I might yet would I nat doe ſo:
But canſt thou playin raket to and fro,
Nettle' in Docke out, now this now that, Pandare?
Now foulè fall her for thy wo that care!

Thou farist eke by me, thou Pandarus,
As he that whan a wight is wo bigon
He cometh to him apace and saith right thus,
Thinke not on smert and thou shalt felè none.
Thou maiest me first transmewin in a stone,
And reve me of my passionis all,
Or thou so lightly do my wo to fall. 469

The deth maie well out of my brest depart
The life, so long maie last this sorowe mine,
But fro my soulè shall Creseid'is dart
Out nevirmore, but doune with Proserpine,
Whan I am dedde, I woll go won in pine,
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, and how that twinnid be we twain. 476

Thou hast here made an argument full fine,
How that it shouldin lassè pain ybe
Creseidè to forgon, for she was mine,
And lived in ese and in felicite:
Why gabbist thou, that saidist erst to me
That him is wors that is fro wele ithrowe
Than he had erst none of that wele iknowe? 483

But tel me now, sens that the thinketh so light
To chaungin so in love aie to and fro,
Why hast thou nat doen busily thy might
To chaungin her that doeth the al thy wo?
Why n'ilt thou let her fro thine hertè go?
Why n'ilt thou love anothir lady swete,
That maie thine hertè settin in quiete? 490

If thou haſt had in love aie yet miſchaunce,
And canſt it not out of thine hertè drive,
I that have lived in luſt and in pleſaunce
With her, as moche as any wight on live,
How ſhould I that foryet, and that ſo blive?
O! where haſt thou ben hid ſo long in mewe
That canſt ſo well and formèliche argewe? 497

Naie, Pandarus, naught worth is all thy rede,
But doutèleſs for ought that may befall,
Withoutin wordis mo, I woll ben dede.
O Deth! that endir art of ſorowes all,
Come now, ſens I ſo oft aftir the call,
For ſely is that deth, ſoth for to ſain,
That oft iclepid cometh and endith pain. 504

Well wote I, while my life was in quiete,
Er thou me ſlue I would have yevin hire,
But now thy comming is to me ſo ſwete
That in this worlde I nothing ſo deſire:
O Deth! ſens with this ſorowe I'am afire
Thou eithir doe me anon in teris drenche
Or with thy coldè ſtroke mine hertè quenche. 511

Sens that thou ſlaeſt ſo ſele in ſondry wiſe
Ayenſt ther will, unprayid, daie and night,
Doe me at my requeſtè this ſervice,
Deliver now the worlde, ſo doeſt thou right,
Of me, that am the ſorowfulliſt wight
That evir was, for time is that I ſterve
Sens in this world of right naught do I ſerve. 518

This Troilus in teris gan diſtill,
As licour out of a limbeck full faſt,
And Pandarus gan hold his tongè ſtill,
And to the ground his eyin doune he caſt,
But nathèleſſe thus thought he at the laſt;
What! parde rathir than my felowe deie
Yet ſhall I ſomwhat more unto him ſeie. 525

And ſayid, Frend, ſens thou haſt ſoche diſtreſſe,
And ſens the liſt mine argumentis blame,
Why n'ilt thou thy ſelvin helpe doen redreſſe,
And with thy manhode lettin all this game?
Go raviſhe her, ne canſt thou not for ſhame?
And eithir let her out of tounè fare
Or hold her ſtill, and leve thy nicè fare. 532

Art thou in Troie and haſt non hardiment
To take a woman whiche that lovith the,
And would her ſelvin ben of thine aſſent?
Now is nat this a nicè vanite?
Riſe up anon and let this weping be,
And kith thou art a man, for in this hour
I woll ben dedde or ſhe ſhall bein our. 539

To this anſwerde him Troilus full ſoft,
And faied, Iwis, my leve brothir dere!
All this have I my ſelf yet thought full oft,
And more thingis than thou deviſiſt here,
But why this thing is laft thou ſhalt well here,
And whan thou haſt me yevin audience
Theraftir maieſt thou tell all thy ſentence. 546

First, sin thou wost this toun hath al this werre
For ravishing of women so by might,
It should not ben ysuffrid me to erre,
As it stont now, ne doen so grete unright;
I should have also blame of every wight
My fathir's graunt if that I so withstode,
Sens she is chaungid for the toun'is gode.

I have eke thought, so it were her assent,
To aske her of my fathir of his grace,
Than thinke I this were her accusement,
Sens well I wot I maie her not purchace;
For sens my fathir in so high a place
As parliment hath her eschaunge enseled
He n'ill for me his lettir be repeled.

Yet drede I moste her hertè to perturbe
With violence, if I doe soche a game,
For if I would it opinly disturbe
It must be disclaundre unto her name,
And me were levir die than her diffame,
As n'oldè God, but if that I should have
Her honour levir than my life to save.

Thus am I lost, for aught that I can se,
For certain is that sith I am her knight
I must her honour levir have than me
In every case, as lovir ought of right:
Thus am I with desire and reson twight,
Desire for to distourbin her me redeth,
And reson n'ill not, so mine hertè dredeth.

Thus weping, that he ne could nevir ceſe,
He ſaied, Alas! how ſhall I wretchè fare?
For well fele I alwaie my love encreſe,
And hope is laſſe and laſſe alway, Pandare;
Encreſin eke the cauſis of my care;
So welawaie! why n'ill mine hertè breſt?
For why? in love there is but little reſt.

Pandare anſwerid, Frend, thou maieſt for me
Doen as the liſt, but had I it ſo hote,
And thine eſtate, ſhe ſhould ygo with me;
Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note,
I n'oldè ſet all that noiſe at a grote,
For whan men have well cried than woll thei roun,
Eke wondir laſt but ix daies nere in toun.

Devinith not in reſon aie ſo depe,
Ne curtiſly, but helpe thy ſelf anon;
Bet is that othir than thy ſelvin wepe,
And namily ſens ye two ben all one:
Riſe up, for by mine hedde ſhe ſhall not gone,
And rathir ben in blame a little found
Than ſterve here as a gnat withoutin wound.

It is no ſhame unto you ne no vice
Her to witholdin that the lovith moſte;
Paravinture ſhe might holde the for nice
To lette her go thus to the Grekis hoſte:
Thinke eke *Fortune*, as well thy ſelvin woſte,
Helpith the hardie man to his empriſe,
And weivith wretchis for ther cowardiſe.

And though thy lady would alite her greve,
Thou ſhalt thy ſelf thy pece hereaftir make;
But as to me certain I can not leve
That ſhe would it as now for evill take,
Why ſhouldè than for fere thine hertè quake?
Thinke how that Paris hath, that is thy brother,
A love, and why ſhal thou not have another? 609

And, Troilus, o thing I dare the ſwere,
That if Creſeidè, whiche that is thy leſe,
Now lovith the as well as thou doeſt here,
God helpe me ſo, ſhe n'ill not take agreſe
Though thou do bote anon in this miſchefe;
And if ſhe wilnith fro the for to paſſe
Than is ſhe falſe, ſo love her well the laſſe. 616

Forthy take hert, and thinke right as a knight,
Through love is brokin al daie every lawe;
Kith now ſomwhat thy corage and thy might;
Have mercie on thy ſelf; for any awe
Let not this wretchid wo thine hert ygnawe,
But manly ſet the worlde on ſixe and ſeven,
And if thou die a martyr go to heven. 623

I woll my ſelf ben with the at this dede,
Though I and all my kin upon a ſtound
Should in a ſtrete as doggis liggin dede,
Through-girt with many a wide blodie wound;
In every caſe I woll a frend be found;
And if the liſte here ſtervin as a wretche
Adieu, the devill ſpedè him that retche! 630

This Troilus gan with tho wordis quicke,
And ſayid, Frend, graunt mercie! I aſſent,
But certainly thou maieſt nat ſo me pricke,
Ne painè none ne maie me ſo tourment,
That for no caſe, it is not mine entent,
At ſhort wordis, though that I dyin ſhould,
To raviſh her but if her ſelf it would. 637

Why, ſo mene I (quod Pandare) al this day;
But tell me than, haſt thou her well aſſaied
That ſoroweſt thus? and he anſwerde him Naie.
Whereof art thou (quod Pandare) than diſmaied,
That n'oſte not that ſhe wol ben il apaied
To raviſhe her, ſens thou haſt not ben there,
But if that Jove the tolde it in thine ere? 644

Forthy riſe up, as naught ne were, anon,
And waſhe thy face, and to the king thou wend,
Or he maie wondrin whidir thou art gon;
Thou muſt with wiſedome him and othir blend,
Or upon caſe he maie aftir the ſend
Or thou be ware: and, ſhortly, brothir dere!
Be glad, and let me werke in this mattere; 651

For I ſhall ſhape it ſo that ſikirly
Thou ſhalt this night ſomtime in ſome manere
Come ſpekin with thy ladie privily,
And by her wordis, eke as by her chere,
Thou ſhalt full ſone aperceve and well here
Of her entent, and in this caſe the beſt;
And fare now well, for in this poinct I reſt. 658

The ſwiftè Famè, whiche that fals thingis
Equall reportith like the thingis true,
Was throughout Troie iſled with preſt wingis
Fro man to man, and made his tale all newe,
How Calchas doughtir with her brightè hewe
At parliment, withoutin wordis more,
Igrauntid was in chaunge of Antenore. 665

The whichè tale anon right as Creſeide
Had herd, ſhe, whiche that of her fathir rought
(As in this caſe) right naught, ne whan he deide,
Full buſily to Jupiter beſought
Yeve him miſchauncè that this tretis brought:
But, ſhortly, leſt theſe talis ſothè were
She durſt at no wight aſkin it for fere. 672

As ſhe that had her hert and all her minde
On Troilus iſet ſo wondir faſt
That all this world ne might her love unbind
Ne Troilus out of her hertè caſt,
She would ben his while that her life maie laſt;
And ſhe thus brennith bothe in love and drede
So that ſhe ne wiſt what was beſt to rede. 679

But as men ſene in toune and all about,
That women uſe ther frendis to viſite,
So to Creſeide of women came a rout
For pitous joie, and wendin her delite,
And with ther talis, dere inough a mite,
Theſe women, whiche that in the cite dwell,
Thei ſet 'hem doune, and ſaied as I ſhall tell. 686

(Quod firſt that one) I am glad truily
Bicauſe of you, that ſhall your fathir ſe.
Anothir ſaied, Iwis ſo am not I,
For all to little hath ſhe with us be.
(Quod tho the thirde) I hope iwis that ſhe
Shall bringin us the pece on every ſide,
That whan ſhe goth Almightie God her gide!

Tho wordis and tho womanniſhe thingis
She herd 'hem right as though ſhe thennis were,
For God it wote her herte on othir thing is;
Although the body ſat emong 'hem there
Her advertence is alwaie ellis where;
For Troilus full faſt her ſoulè ſought;
Withoutin worde on him alwaie ſhe thought.

Theſe women that thus wendin her to pleſe
Aboutin naught gon all ther talis ſpende;
Sochè vanite ne can doen her none eſe,
As ſhe that all this menè whilè brende
Of othir paſſion than thei ywende,
So that ſhe felte almoſte her hertè die
For wo, and werie of that companie.

For whichè might ſhe no lengir reſtrain
Her teris, thei ganin ſo up to well,
That gavin ſignis of her bittir pain
In whiche her ſpirite was and muſt ydwell,
Remembring her from heven unto which hel
She fallin was ſens ſhe forgo the ſight
Of Troilus, and ſorowfully ſhe ſight.

And thilkè folis fitting her about
Wendin that fhe had wept and fighid fore
Bicaufe that fhe fhouldin out of the rout
Departin, and nevir plaie with 'hem more;
And thei that haddin knowin her of yore
Se her fo wepe, and thought it was kindneffe,
And eche of 'hem wept eke for her diftreffe. 721

And bufilie thei gonnin her comforte
On thing God wot on which fhe little thought,
And with ther talis wendin her difporte,
And to be glad thei oftin her befought;
But foche an efe therwith thei in her wrought
Right as a man is efid for to fele
For ache of hedde to clawen' him on his hele. 728

But after all this nicè vanite
Thei toke ther leve, and home thei wentin all;
Crefeidè, full of forowfull pite,
Into her chambre' up went out of the hall,
And on her bedde fhe gan for dedde to fall,
In purpofe nevir thennis for to rife,
And thus fhe wrought, as I fhall you devife. 735

Her owndid heer, that fonnifhe was of hewe,
She rent, and eke her fingirs long and fmale
She wrong ful oft, and bade God on her rue,
And with the death to doe bote on her bale;
Her hewè, whilom bright, that tho was pale,
Bare witneffe of her wo and her conftreint,
And thus fhe fpake, fobbing in her compleint: 742

Alas! (quod she) out of this regioun
I, wofull wretche and infortunid wight,
And borne in cursid constellacioun,
Mote gon, and thus departin fro my knight!
Wo worthe, alas! that ilkè day is light
On which I sawe him first with eyin twain
That causith me and I him all this pain!

Therwith the teris from her eyin two
Doune fell as shouris full in Aprill swithe,
Her whitè brest she bet, and for the wo
Aftir the deth she cried a thousande sithe,
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lith
She mote forgon, for whiche disavinture
She helde her selfin a forlost creture.

She saied, How shall he doen and I also!
How should I live if that I from him twin!
O derè herte eke, that I lovè so,
Who shall that sorowe slaen that ye ben in!
O Calchas, fathir! thine be all this sin!
O mothir mine, that clepid wer Argive,
Wo worth that daie that thou me bare on live!

To what fine should I live and sorowen thus?
How should a fishe withoutin watir dure?
What is Creseidè worth from Troilus?
How should a plant or any othir creture
Livin withoute his kindly noriture?
For whiche full oft a byword here I seie,
That erthèless mote grene medis sone deye.

I ſhall doen thus, ſens neither ſwerd ne dart
Dare I none handle for the cruilte,
That ilkè daie that I fro you depart,
If ſorowe of that n'ill nat my bane be,
Than ſhall no mete ne drinke ycome in me
Till I my ſoule out of my breſt unſheth,
And thus my ſelvin woll I doen to deth. 777

And, Troilus, my clothis everichone
Shull blackè ben, in tokining, herte ſwete!
That I am as out of this worlde agone
That wont ywas you to ſet in quiete,
And of mine ordir aie, till deth me mete,
The obſervaunce evir in your abſence
Shall ſorowe ben, complaint and abſtinence. 784

Mine herte, and eke the wofull ghoſt therein,
Biqueth I with your ſpirite to complain
Eternally, for thei ſhall nevir twin;
For though in yerth ytwinnid be we twain,
Yet in the felde of pite, out of pain,
That hight Elyſium, we ſhall ben yfere,
As Orpheus and Eurydice his fere. 791

Thus, hertè mine! for Antenor, alas!
I ſone ſhall be ychaungid, as I wene;
But how ſhull ye doen in this wofull caas?
How ſhall your tendir hertè thus ſuſtein?
But, hertè mine! foryet this ſorowe'and tene,
And me alſo; for, ſothly for to ſeie,
So ye well fare I retche not for to deie. 798

How might it evir redde ben or isong
The plaintis that she made in her distresse?
I n'ot, but as for me, my little tong,
If I discrivin would her hevinesse,
It should ymake her sorowe semè lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Her hie complaint, and therfore I it pace. 805

Pandarus, whiche that sent from Troilus
Was to Creseide, as ye have herd devise,
That for the best it was accordid thus,
And he full glad to doen him that service
Unto Creseide in a full secrete wise,
There as she laie in tourment and in rage,
Came her to tell all wholly his message; 812

And fonde that she her selvin gan to trete
Full pitously, for with her saltè teres
Her brest and face ibathid was full wete,
Her mightie tressis of her sonnishe heres
Unbroidin hangin all about her eres,
Whiche yavin him very signall martire
Of deth, whiche that her hertè gan desire. 819

Whan she him sawe she gan for sorowe' anon
Her tery face atwixt her armis hide,
For whiche this Pandare is so wo bigon
That in the hous he might unneth abide,
As he that felt sorowe on every side,
For if Creseide had erst complainid sore
Tho gan she plain a thousande timis more, 826

And in her aſpre plaintè thus ſhe ſeide;
Pandare, my eme, of joyis mo than two
Was cauſe, cauſing firſt to me Creſeide,
That now tranſmutid bin in cruil wo,
Wher' ſhall I ſaie to you welcome or no,
That aldirfirſt me brought unto ſerviſe
Of love, alas! that endith in ſoche wiſe? 833

Endith than love in wo? ye, or men lieth,
And every worldly bliſſe, as thinkith me;
The ende of bliſſe aie ſorowe occupieth;
And who ſo trowith not that it ſo be
Let him upon me woſull wretchè ſe,
That my ſelf hate, and aie my birthè curſe,
Feling alwaie fro wicke I go to worſe. 840

Whoſo me ſeeth ſeeth ſorowe all atonis,
Paine, turment, wo, and plaint, and eke diſtreſs;
Out of my woſull bodie harme there none is,
As langour, anguiſhe, cruill bittirneſſe,
Annoie, ſmarte, drede, furie, and eke ſikneſſe:
I trowe iwis from hevin teris rain
For pite of my aſpre' and cruill pain. 847

O thou my ſuſtir! full of diſcomfort,
(Quod Pandarus) what thinkiſt thou to doe?
Why ne' haſt thou to thy ſelvin ſome reſport?
Why wilt thou thus thy ſelf, alas! fordo?
Leve all this werke, and take now hede to
That I ſhall ſain, and herken' of gode entent
This that by me thy Troilus the ſent. 854

Tournid her tho Creſeide a wo making
So grete, that it a deth was for to ſe:
Alas! (quod ſhe) what wordis maie ye bring,
What woll my dere herte ſendin unto me,
Whiche that I dredè nevir more to ſe?
Woll he have plaint or teris er I wende?
I have inough if he theraftir ſende.

She was right ſoche to ſene in her viſage
As is that wight that men on bere ybinde,
Her face, like of paradis the image,
Was all ichaungid in anothir kinde;
The plaie, the laughtir, men wer wont to find
In her, and eke her joyis everichone,
Ben fledde; and thus lieth Creſeidè alone.

About her eyin two a purpre ring
Bitrent, in ſothfaſt tokening of her pain,
That to behold it was a dedly thing,
For whiche Pandarus ne might nat reſtrain
The teris from his eyin for to rain;
But nathèleſſe as he beſt might he ſeide
From Troilus theſe wordis to Creſeide:

Lo! nece, I trowe well ye han herd all how
The King, with othir lordis, for the beſt
Hath made eſchaunge of Antenor and you,
That cauſe is of this ſorowe and unreſt,
But how this caſe doth Troilus moleſt
This maie none yerthly mann'is tong yſaie;
For very wo his wit is all awaie:

For whiche we have ſo ſorowed he and I,
That into little it had bothe us ſlawe,
But through my counſaile this daie, finally,
He ſomwhat hath fro weping him withdrawe,
And ſemith me that he deſirith fawe
With you to ben all night, for to deviſe
Remedie' of this, if there were any wiſe.

This, ſhort and plain, th' effect of my meſſage,
As ferforthe as my wit can comprehende,
For ye that ben of tourment in ſoche rage
Maie to no long prologue as now entende,
And hereupon ye maie anſwere him ſende;
And for the love of God, my necè dere!
So leve this wo or Troilus be here.

Grete is my wo, (quod ſhe) and ſighid ſore,
As ſhe that felith dedly ſharpe diſtreſſe,
But yet to me his ſorowe' is mokill more,
That love him bet than he himſelf I geſſe.
Alas! for me hath he ſoche hevineſſe?
Can he for me ſo pitouſly complain?
Iwis this ſorowe doublith all my pain.

Grevous to me, God wot, it is to twin,
(Quod ſhe) but yet it hardir is to me
To ſene that ſorowe which that he is in,
For well wot I it woll my banè be,
And die I woll in certain tho (quod ſhe:)
But bid him come er Deth that thus me threteth
Drive out that ghoſt which in min hert ybeteth.

These wordis ſaied, ſhe on her armis two
Fill gruffe, and gan to wepin pitouſly.
(Quod Pandarus) Alas! why doe ye ſo,
Sens ye well wote the time is faſtè by
That he ſhall come? ariſe up haſtily,
That he you nat biwopin thus yſinde,
But ye wol have him wode out of his minde:

For wiſt he that ye farde in this manere
He would himſelfin ſlea; and if I wende
To have this fare he ſhould not comin here
For all the gode that Priam maie diſpende,
For to what fine he would anon pretende,
That know I well; and forthy yet I ſeie
So leve this ſorowe', or, plainly, he woll deie:

And ſhapith you his ſorowe for to' abredge
And nat encreſin, leſè necè ſwete!
Bethe rathir to him cauſe of plat than edge,
And with ſome wiſedom ye his ſorowes bete:
What helpith it to wepin full a ſtrete,
Or though ye bothe in ſaltè teris dreint?
Bet is a time of cure aie than of pleint.

I menè thus, whan I him hithir bring,
Sens ye be wiſe, and bothe of one aſſent,
So ſhapith how to diſtourbe your going,
Or come ayen ſone aftir ye be went:
Women ben wiſe in ſhort aviſèment;
And let ſene how your wit ſhall now availe,
And what that I maie help it ſhall nat faile.

Go, (quod Creſeide) and, uncle, truily
I ſhall doen all my might me to reſtrain
From weping in his ſight, and buſily
Him for to glad I ſhall doen all my pain,
And in my hertè ſekin every vain:
If to this ſore there maie ben foundin ſalve
It ſhall not lacke certain on mine behalve.

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he ſought,
Till in a temple' he found him all alone,
As he that of his life no lengir rought,
But to the pitous goddis everichone
Full tendirly he praied and made his mone,
To doen him ſone out of this worlde to pace,
For wel he thought there was non othir grace.

And, ſhortly, all the ſothè for to ſeie,
He was ſo fallin in diſpaire that daie
That uttirly he ſhope him for to deie;
For right thus was his argument alwaie,
He ſaied he n'as but lornè, welawaie!
For all that cometh cometh by neceſſite,
Thus to ben lorne it is my deſtine:

For certainly this wote I well, he ſaide
That foreſight of the divine purveiaunce
Had ſene alwaie me to forgon Creſeide,
Sens God ſeeth every thing out of doutaunce,
And them diſpoſith through his ordinaunce
In his meritis ſothly for to be
As thei ſhull comin by predeſtine.

But nathèlesse, alas! whom shall I leve?
For there ben gretè clerkis many one
That destine through argumentis preve,
And some ysain that nedely there is none,
But that fre choice is yeven' us everichone.
O welawaie! so sligh arne clerkis old
That I n'ot whose opinion I maie hold. 973

For some men sain that God seeth al biforne,
Ne God maie nat decevid ben parde;
Than mote it fallin, though men had it sworne,
That purveiaunce hath sene beforne to be;
Wherfore I saie that from eterne if he
Hath wist beforn our thought eke as our dede
We have no fre choice, as these clerkis rede. 980

For othir thought nor othir dede also
Might nevir ben but soche as purveiaunce,
Whiche maie not ben discevid nevir mo,
Hath feled biforne withoutin ignoraunce;
For if there might yben a variaunce
To writhin out fro Godd'is purveying
There n'ere no prescience of thing comming; 987

But it were rathir an opinion
Uncertain, and no stedfast foreseing;
And certis that were an abusion
That God should have no perfect clere weting
More than we men, that have doutous wening:
But soche an errour upon God to gesse
Were false and foule, and wickid cursidnesse. 994

Eke this is an opinion of some
That have ther top ful high and smoth ishore,
Thei sain right thus, that thing is nat to come
For that the prescience hath sene before
That it shal come, but thei sain that therfore
That it shall come, therfore the purveiaunce
Wote it beforne withoutin ignoraunce. 1001

And in this manir this necessite
Retournith in his place contrary' againe,
For nedefully behovith it nat be
That thilkè thingis fallin in certaine
That ben purveyed, but nedefully', as thei saine,
Behovith it that thingis which that fall
That thei in certaine ben purveyid all: 1008

I mene as though I laboured me in this
To enquire which thing cause of which thing be,
As whethir that the prescience of God is
The certaine cause of the necessite
Of thingis that to comin be parde,
Or if necessite of thing coming
Be the cause certaine of the purveying. 1015

But nowe ne' enforce I me not in shewing
How the' ordir of the causis stant, but wot I
That it behovith that the befalling
Of thingis wistè before certainly
Be necessarie, al seme it not therby
That prescience put falling necessayre
To thing to come, al fal it foule or faire: 1022

For if there ſit a man yonde on a ſe,
Than by neceſſite behovith it
That certis thine opinion ſothe be
That weniſt or conjectiſt that he ſit;
And furthirovir now ayenwarde hit,
Lo! right ſo is it on the part contrarie,
As thus; now herkin, for I wol nat tarie: 1029

I ſay that if the opinion of the
Be ſothe for that he ſit, than ſay I this,
That he mote ſittin by neceſſite,
And thus neceſſite in eithir is;
For in him nede of ſitting is iwis,
And in the nede of ſothe; and thus forſothe
There mote neceſſite ben in you bothe. 1036

But thou maiſt ſaine, the man ſit nat therfore
That thine opinion of his ſitting ſoth is,
But rathir for the man ſate there before,
Therfore is thine opinion ſothe iwis:
And I ſay, though the cauſe of ſothe is this
Cometh of his ſitting, yet neceſſite
Is enterchaungid bothe in him and the. 1043

Thus in the ſamè wiſe out of doutaunce
I maie wel makin, as it ſemith me,
My reſoning of Godd'is purveyaunce,
And of the thingis that to comin be,
By whichè reſon men maie wel iſe
That thilkè thingis that in erthe befall
That by neceſſite thei comin all: 1050

For although that this thing ſhall come iwis,
Therfore is it purveyid certainly,
Nat that it cometh for it purveyid is;
Yet nathèleſſe behoveth it nedefully
That thing to come be purveyid trewely,
Or ellis thingis that purveyid be
That thei betidin by neceſſite. 1057

And thus ſuffiſith right inough certaine
For to diſtroie our fre choiſe everydell;
But now is this abuſion to ſaine
That falling of the thingis temporell
Is cauſe of Godd'is preſcience eternell;
Now trewily that is a falſe ſentence
That thing to come ſhould cauſe his preſcience. 1064

What might I wene and I had ſuche a thought,
But that God purveieth thing that is to come
For that it is to come, and ellis nought?
So might I wene that thingis all and ſome
That whilom ben bifall and ovircome
Ben cauſe of thilkè ſoveraine purveiaunce
That forwote al withoutin ignoraunce. 1071

And ore al this yet ſay I more therto,
That right as whan I wote there is a thing
Iwis that thing mote nedefully be ſo,
Eke right ſo whan I wote a thing coming,
So mote it come; and thus the befalling
Of thingis that ben wiſte before the tide
Thei mote not ben eſchewid on no ſide. 1078

Than said he thus, Almighty Jove in trone!
That wottest of all this thing the sothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorowe, and do me dien sone,
Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse.
And while he was in all this hevinesse,
Disputing with himselse in this matere,
Came Pandare in, and saide as ye maie here:

O mighty God (quod Pandarus) in trone!
Eigh! who saw er a wise man farin so?
Why, Troilus! what thinkist thou to done?
Hast thou such lust to ben thine ownè soe?
What! parde yet is not Creseide ago?
Why list the so thy selse fordon for drede
That in thine hed thine eyin semin dede.

Hast thou nat livid many a yere beforne
Withoutin her, and farde ful wel at ese?
Art thou for her and for none othir borne?
Hath Kinde the wrought al only her to plese?
Let be, and thinke right thus in thy disese,
That in the dice right as there fallin chaunces,
Right so in love there come and gon plesaunces.

And yet this is a wondir most of al
Why thou thus sorowest, seth thou wost nat yit
Touching her goyng how that it shal fal,
Ne if she can her selse distourbin it;
Thou hast not yet assayid al her wit:
A man maie al betime his neckè bede
Whan it shal of, and sorowen at the nede.

Forthy take hede of al that I ſhal ſay:
I have with her iſpoke and longe ibe,
So as accordid was betwixe us twey,
And evirmore me thinkith thus, that ſhe
Hath ſomwhat in her hert'is privite
Wherwith ſhe can, if I ſhal aright rede,
Diſturbe al this of whiche thou art in drede.

For which my counſel is, whan it is night
Thou to her go, and make of this an ende,
And bliſful Juno, through her gretè might,
Shal (as I hope) her grace unto us ſende;
Mine hert ſeith certaine that ſhe ſhal nat wende:
And forthy put thine hert a while in reſt,
And holde thy purpoſe, for it is the beſt.

This Troilus anſwerde, and ſighid ſore,
Thou ſaiſt right wel, and I wil do right ſo,
And what him liſt he ſaid unto him more:
And whan that it was timè for to go
Ful privily himſelfe withoutin mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done,
And how thei wrought I ſhal you tellin ſone.

Soth is, that when thei gonnin firſt to mete
So gan the paine ther hertis for to twiſte
That neithir of 'hem othir mightè grete,
But 'hem in armis toke and aftir kiſte;
The laſſè wofull of 'hem bothe ne wiſte
Wher that he was, ne might o word out bring,
As I ſaid erſt, for wo and for ſobbing.

The woful teris that thei letin fal
As bittir werin, out of teris kinde,
For paine, as is ligne aloes or gal;
So bittir teris wept nat, as I finde,
The wofull Myrrha through the barke and rinde,
That in this world ther n'is so hard an hert
That n'old have rewid on ther painis smert. 1141

But whan ther wofull wery gostis twaine
Returnid ben there as 'hem ought to dwell,
And that somwhat to wekin gan the paine
By length of plainte, and ebbin gan the wel
Of ther salt teris, and the hert unswel,
With brokin voice, all horse for shright, Creseide
To Troilus these ilkè wordis seide: 1148

O Jove! I die, and mercy the beseche;
Helpe, Troilus: and therwithal her face
Upon his brest she laid, and lost her speche,
Her wofull spirite from his propir place
Right with the worde away in point to pace:
And thus she lith with hewis pale and grene
That whilom fresh and fairist was to sene. 1155

This Troilus that on her gan beholde,
Cleping her name, and she lay as for ded,
Withoutin answere, and felte her limmes colde,
Her eyin throwin upwarde to her hed,
This sorouful man can now non othir rede,
But oftin time her coldè mouthe he kiste:
Where him was wo God and himself it wiste. 1162

He riſith up, and long ſtraite he her leide,
For ſigne of life for aught he can or may
Can he none finde in nothing of Creſeide,
For whiche his ſonge ful oft is Welaway!
But whan he ſawe that ſpechèleſſe ſhe lay,
With forouful voice, and hert of bliſſe al bare,
He ſaid how ſhe was fro this world iſare. 1169

So aftir that he long had her complained,
His hondis wronge, and ſaid that was to ſey,
And with his teris ſalt her breſt berained,
He gan tho teris wipin of full drey,
And pitouſly gan for the ſoulè prey,
And ſaid, O Lord! that ſet art in thy trone,
Rewe eke on me, for I ſhal folow' her ſone. 1176

She colde was, and withoutin ſentèment,
For ought he wote, for brethe yet felte he none,
And this was him a preignant argument
That ſhe was forth out of this worlde agone;
And when he ſaw there was non othir wonne
He gan her limmis dreſſe in ſuche manere
As men don them that ſhall ben laide on bere. 1183

And aftir this with ſterne and cruill herte
His ſwerd anon out of his ſheth he twight,
Himſelfe to ſleen, how ſore ſo that him ſmerte,
So that his ſoule her ſoule folowin might
There as the dome of Minos would it dight,
Sith Love and cruil Fortune it ne would
That in this world he lengir livin ſhould. 1190

Than ſaid he thus, fulfilde of high diſdaine;
O cruil Jove! and thou Fortune adverſe!
This al and ſome is, falſely have ye ſlaine
Creſeide, and ſith ye may do me no werſe,
Fie on your might and werkis ſo diverſe!
Thus cowardely ye ſhul me nevir winne;
There ſhal no deth me fro my lady twinne. 1197

For I this world, ſith ye have ſlain her thus,
Wol let, and folow' her ſpirit lowe or hie;
Shal nevir lovir ſaine that Troilus
Dare nat for ferè with his lady die,
For certaine I wol bere her companie;
But ſithe ye wol nat ſuffre' us livin here,
Yet ſuffrith that our ſoulis ben iſere. 1204

And thou, Cite! in whiche I live in wo,
And thou, Priam! and brethrin al iſere!
And thou, my mothir! farwel, for I go,
And Atropos! make redy thou my bere,
And thou, Creſeidè! o ſwete hertè dere!
Receve thou now my ſpirite, would he ſey,
With ſwerde at hert, al redy for to dey. 1211

But as God would of ſwough ſhe tho abraide,
And gan to ſighe, and Troilus! ſhe cride;
And he anſwerid, Lady mine, Creſeide!
Livin ye yet? and let his ſwerde doune glide.
Ye, hertè mine! that thankid be Cupide,
(Quod ſhe) and therwithal ſhe ſorè ſight,
And he began to glade her as he might; 1218

Toke her in armis two, and kiſte her ofte,
And her to glad he did al his entent,
For whiche her goſt, that flickered aie alofte,
Into her wofull hert aien it went;
But at the laſte, as that her eyin glent
Aſide, anon ſhe gan his ſwerde aſpie
As it lay bare, and gan for fere to crie, 1225

And aſkid him why he had it out drawe?
And Troilus anon the cauſe her tolde,
And how himſelf therwith he would have ſlawe;
For whiche Creſeide upon him gan beholde,
And gan him in her armis faſt to folde,
And ſaide, O mercy, God! lo whiche a dede!
Alas! how nighe we werin bothè dede! 1232

Than if I ne hadde ſpokin, as grace was,
Ye would have ſlaine your ſelfe anon? quod ſhe.
Ye, doutleſſe. And ſhe anſwerde, Alas!
For by that ilkè Lorde that madè me
I n'olde a forlong waie on live have be,
Aftir your deth, to have ben crounid quene
Of al the londe the ſunne on ſhinith ſhene; 1239

But with this ſelvè ſwerde which that here is
My ſelfin I would have ſlaine (quod ſhe) tho.
But ho! for we have right inough of this,
And let us riſe and ſtraite to beddè go,
And there let us yſpekin of our wo,
For by that morter whiche that I ſe brenne
Know I ful well that day is nat far henne. 1246

Whan thei wer in ther bedde in armis folde
Naught was it like tho nightis here beforne,
For petouſly eche othir gan beholde,
As thei that haddin al ther bliſſe ilorne,
Bewailing al the daie that thei were borne,
Till at the laſt this wofull wight Creſeide
To Troilus theſe ilkè wordis ſeide:

Lo, hertè mine! wel wote ye this, (quod ſhe)
That if a wight alwaie his wo complaine,
And ſekith nat how holpin for to be,
It n'is but folie and encrece of paine;
And ſens that here aſſemblid be we twaine
To findin bote of wo that we ben in,
It were all time right ſone for to begin.

I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte,
And as I am aviſid ſodainly,
So wol I tel it you while it is hotte:
Me thinkith thus, that neithir ye nor I
Ought halfe this wo to makin ſkilfully,
For there is art inough for to redreſſe
That yet is miſſe, and ſleen this hevineſſe.

Soth is, the wo the whiche that we ben inne,
For aught I wote, for nothing ellis is
But for the cauſè that we ſhould ytwinne;
Conſidrid al there n'is no more amis:
And what is than a remedy' unto this
But that we ſhape us ſonè for to mete?
This al and ſome is, my dere hertè ſwete!

Now that I ſhal wel bringin it aboute
To comen' ayen ſone aftir that I go
Therof am I no manir thing in doute,
For dredèleſſe within a weke or two
I ſhal ben here; and that it may be ſo
By allè right, and that in wordis few,
I ſhal you wel an hepe of wayis ſhewe;

For whiche I woll nat makin longe ſermon,
For time iloſte may not recovered be,
But I wol go to my concluſion,
And to the beſte in aught that I can ſe;
And for the love of God forgive it me
If I ſpeke aught aienſt your hert'is reſte,
For trewily I ſpeke it for the beſte;

Making alway a proteſtacion,
That in effect this thing that I ſhall ſay
N'is but to ſhewin you my mocion
To find unto our helpe the beſtè way,
And takith it none othirwiſe I pray;
For, finally, what ſo ye me commaunde
That wol I done, for that is no demaunde.

Now herkenith this: Ye have well underſtond
My goyng grauntid is by parliment,
So ferforth that it may not ben withſtond
For al this world, as by my jugèment;
And ſithe there helpith none aviſèment
To lettin it, lette it paſſe out of mind,
And let us ſhape a bettir waie to finde.

The ſothe is this; the twinning of us twaine
Wol us diſeſe and cruilly anoie,
But him behovith ſomtime havin paine
That ſervith Love, if that he wol have joie;
And ſith I ſhal no farthir out of Troie
Than I maie ride aien on halfe a morowe
It ought the laſſe cauſin us for to ſorowe;

So as I ſhal nat now ben hid in mewe,
That day by day, min ownè hertè dere!
Sens wel ye wote that it is nowe a trewe,
Ye ſhal ful wel al mine eſtate yhere,
And er that truce is done I ſhal ben here;
And thus have ye both Antenor iwonne
And me alſo. Bethe glad now if ye conne.

And thinke right thus, Creſeide is now agon,
But what? ſhe ſhal come haſtily ayen:
And whan? alas! by God, lo, right anon,
Er dayis ten, this dare I ſafely ſaine,
And than as erſte ſhall we be bothè faine,
So as we ſhall togithers evir dwell,
That al this worlde ne might our bliſſè tell.

I ſe that oft time, there as we ben nowe,
That for the beſte, our counſaile for to hide,
Ye ſpekè nat with me nor I with you
In fourtènight, ne ſe you go ne ride;
And may ye nat ten dayis than abide,
For mine honour, in ſuche an avinture?
Iwis ye mowe, or ellis lite endure.

Ye knowe eke howe that all my kin is here
But if that onely it my fathir be,
And eke mine othir thingis al ifere,
And namily my derè hertè ye,
Whom that I n'olde levin for to ſe
For al this worlde, as wide as it hath ſpace,
Or ellis ſe I nevir Jov'is face. 1337

Why trowin ye my fathir in this wiſe
Covetith ſo to ſe me, but for drede
Leſte in this toune that folkis me diſpiſe
Bicauſe of him for his unhappy dede?
What wote my fathir what life that I lede?
For if he wiſt in Troie how wel I fare
Us nedid for my wending nat to care. 1344

Ye ſene that every day eke more and more
Men trete of pece, and it ſuppoſid is
That men the Quene Helena ſhal reſtore,
And Grekis us reſtore that is amis;
So though there ne were comfort none but this,
That men purpoſin pece on every ſide,
Ye may the bett at eſe of herte abide: 1351

For if that it be pece, mine hertè dere!
The nature of the pece mote nedis drive
That men muſt entrecommunin iſere,
And to and fro eke ride and gone as blive
Al day as thicke as been ſlien from an hive,
And every wight have liberty to bleve
Where as him liſt the bet withoutin leve. 1358

And though ſo be that pece ther maie be none,
Yet hither, though ther nevir pece ne were,
I moſt ycome, for whidir ſhould I gone?
Or how, miſchauncè! ſhould I dwellin there
Among tho men of armis evre' in fere?
For whiche, as wiſely God my ſoulè rede,
I can nat ſene wherof ye ſhouldin drede.

Have here anothir way, if it ſo be
That al this thing ne maie you not ſuffice:
My fathir, as ye knowin wel parde,
Is holdin olde and ful of covitiſe,
And I right nowe have foundin al the giſe
Withoutin nette wherwith I ſhal him hent,
And herkenith now if that ye wol aſſent.

Lo! Troilus, men ſaine full harde it is
The wolfe ful and the wedir whole to have;
This is to ſaine, that men full oft iwis
Mote ſpendin parte the remnant for to ſave;
For aie with golde men maie the hert ygrave
Of him that is ſet upon covitiſe;
And how I mene I ſhal it you deviſe.

The movable whiche I have in this toune
Unto my fathir ſhal I take, and ſaie,
That right for truſt and for ſalvacioun
It ſent is from a frende of his or twaie,
The which frendis do fervently him praie
To ſendin aftir more, and that in hie,
While that this toun ſtant thus in jeopardie;

And that ſhal be of golde huge quantite;
Thus ſhal I fain, but leſt folke it aſpide
This maie be ſent by no wight but by me:
I ſhal eke ſhewin him, if pece betide,
What frendis that I have on every ſide
To doe the wrathe of Priamus to pace
Towardis him, and don him ſtand in grace.

So what for o thing and for othir, ſwete!
I ſhal him ſo enchauntin with my ſawes
That right in hevin his ſoule ſhal he mete;
For al Apollo or his clerkis lawes,
Or calculing, availith nat thre hawes;
Deſire of golde ſhal ſo his ſoulè blende
That as me liſte I ſhall wel make an ende.

And if he would aught by his ſort it preve
If that I lie, in certaine I ſhal fonde
Diſturbin him, and plucke him by the ſleve,
Makin his ſorte, and berin him on honde,
He hath nat wel the goddis undirſtonde,
For goddis ſpeke in amphibologies,
And for o ſothe thei tellin twenty lies:

Eke dredè fond firſt goddis, I ſuppoſe,
Thus ſhal I faine, and that his cowarde herte
Made him amis the goddis text to gloſe
Whan he for ferdè out of Troiè ſterte;
And but I makin him ſone to converte,
And done my rede within a day or twey,
I wol to you obligè me to dey.

And trewily, as writtin wel I finde,
That al this thing was said of gode entent,
And that her hertè trewè was and kinde
Towardis him, and spake right as she ment,
And that she starfe for wo nigh when she went,
And was in purpose evir to be trewe,
This writin thei that of her werkis knewe.

This Troilus, with hert and eris sprad,
Herde al this thing devisid to and fro,
And verily it semid that he had
The selvin witte, but yet to let her go
His hertè misforyave him evirmo;
But finally he gan his hertè wrest
To trustin her, and toke it for the best;

For whiche the grete fury of his penaunce
Was queint with hope, and therwith 'hem bitwene
Began for joyè the amorous daunce;
And as the birdis when the sunnè shene
Delitin in ther songe in levis grene,
Right so the wordis that thei spake isere
Delitin them, and made ther hertis chere.

But nathèlesse the wending of Creseide
For al this world may nat out of his minde,
For whiche ful oft he petously her preide
That of her heste he might her trewe yfinde,
And saide her, Certis if ye be unkinde,
And but ye come at daie set into Troie,
Ne shal I nere have hele, honor, ne joie:

For all ſo ſothe as ſunne upriſt to morow,
And God ſo wiſely thou me woful wretche
To reſt ybring out of this cruil ſorow,
I wol my ſelvin ſle if that ye dretche;
But of my deth though litil be to retche,
Yet er that ye me cauſin ſo to ſmerte
Dwel rathir here mine ownè dere ſwete herte! 1449

For trewily, mine ownè lady dere!
The ſleightis yet that I have herd you ſtere
Ful ſhapely ben to fallin al iſere,
For thus men ſaith, *That one thinkith the bere,*
But al anothir thinkith the ledere:
Your ſire is wiſe, and ſaid is out of drede
Men may the wiſe outrenne and nat outrede. 1456

It is full harde to haltin uneſpied
Before a crepil, for he can the crafte;
Your fathir is in ſleight as Argus eied,
For al be'it that his movble' is him birafte
His oldè ſleight is yet ſo with him lafte
Ye ſhal not blende him for your womanhede,
Ne faine aright, and that is al my drede. 1463

I n'ot if pece ſhall evirmo betide,
But pece or no, for erneſt ne for game,
I wote ſith Calchas on the Grekis ſide
Hath onis ben, and loſt ſo foule his name,
He dare no more come here ayen for ſhame,
For whiche that we, for ought I can eſpy,
To truſtin on n'is but a fantaſie. 1470

Ye shal eke sene your fathir shall you glose
To ben a wife, and, as he can wel preche,
He shal some Greke so prese and wel alose,
That ravishin he shal you with his speche,
Or do you done by force, as he shal teche,
And Troilus, on whom you n'il have routh,
Shal causèlesse so stervin in his trouth. 1477

And ore al this your fathir shal dispise
Us al, and saine this cite is but lorne,
And that th' assegè nevir shal arise;
For why? the Grekis have it allè sworne,
Til we ben slaine and doun our wallis torne:
And thus he shal you with his wordis fere,
That aie drede I that ye wol blevin there. 1484

Ye shall eke sene so many' a lusty knight
Among the Grekis, ful of worthinesse,
And eche of 'hem with hertè, wit, and might,
To plesin you done al his businesse,
That ye shull dullin of the rudinesse
Of us the sely Trojans, but if routhe
Remordin you or vertue of your trouthe. 1491

And this to me so grevouse is to thinke
That fro my brest it wol my soulè rende,
Ne dredèlesse in me there may nat sinke
O gode opinion if that ye wende;
For why? your fathir's sleightis wol us shende:
And if ye gone, as I have tolde you yore,
So thinke I n'am but ded withoutin more: 1498

For which with humble, true, and pitous, hert
A thouſande timis mercie I you praie,
So rewith on mine aſpre painis ſmert,
And doth ſomwhat as that I ſhal you ſaie,
And let us ſtele away betwixt us twaie,
And thinke that foly' is whan a man maie cheſe
For accident his ſubſtaunce for to leſe.

I menè thus, that ſens we mowe or daie
Well ſtele awaie, and ben togither ſo,
What wit were it to puttin in affaie
(In caſe ye ſhouldin to your fathir go)
If that ye mightin come aien or no?
Thus mene I, that it were a grete folie
To put that ſikirneſſe in jeopardie.

And, vulgarly to ſpekin of ſubſtaunce,
Of treſour may we bothè with us lede
Ynough to live in honour and pleſaunce
Untill the timè that we ſhall ben dede,
And thus we may eſchewin all this drede;
For every othir waie ye can recorde
Mine hert iwis maie therwith nat acorde.

And hardily ne dredith no poverte,
For I have kin and frendis ellis where
That though we comin in our barè ſherte
Us ſhuldè nevir lacke ne golde ne gere,
But ben honourid while we dweltin there:
And go we' anone, for as in mine entent
This is the beſt, if that ye wol aſſent.

Creſeidè with a ſighe right in this wiſe
Anſwerid him; Iwis, my dere hert trewe!
We maie well ſtele away as ye deviſe,
And findin ſuche unthrifty wayis newe,
But aftirwarde ful ſore it wol us rewe;
And helpe me God ſo at my moſtè nede
As cauſeleſſe ye ſuffrin al this drede:

For thilkè day that I for cheriſhing
Or drede of fathir, or for othir wight,
Or for eſtate, delite, or for weding,
Be falſe to you, my Troilus, my knight!
Saturnus doughtir Juno, through her might,
As wode as Atalanta do me dwell
Eternally in Styx, the pit of hell.

And this on every god celeſtiall
I ſwere it you, and eke on eche goddeſſe,
On every nymph and deite infernall,
On Satyrys and Faunys more and leſſe,
That halvè goddis ben of wildirneſſe;
And Atropos my thred of life to breſt
If I be falſe. Now trowe me if you leſt.

And thou, Simois, that as an arowe clere
Through Troie renniſt aie dounward to the ſe,
Be witneſſe of this worde that ſaid is here,
That thilkè day that I untrewè be
To Troilus, mine ownè hertè fre!
That thou returne backewarde unto thy well,
And I with body and ſoule ſinke to hell.

But that ye ſpeke awaie thus for to go,
And lettin al your frendis, God forbede
For any woman that ye ſhouldin ſo!
And namily ſens Troie hath now ſuch nede
Of helpe; and eke of o thing takith hede,
If this were wiſte, my life laie in balaunce
And your honor, God ſhilde us fro miſchaunce! 1561

And if ſo be that pece hereaſtir take,
As al daie happith aſtir angre game,
Why, Lorde! the ſorow' and wo ye woldin make
That ye ne durſt comin ayen for ſhame!
And er that ye jeopardin ſo your name
Beth nat to haſty in this hottè fare,
For haſty man ne wantith nevir care. 1568

What trowe ye the peple eke al aboute
Would of it ſay? it is ful light to' arede;
Thei woldin ſay, and ſwere it out of doute,
That love ne drave you nat to don this dede,
But luſte voluptuous and cowarde drede:
Thus were al loſte iwis, mine hertè dere!
Your honour, whiche that now ſo ſhinith clere. 1575

And alſo thinkith on mine honeſte,
That flourith yet, how foule I ſhould it ſhende,
And with what filth it ſpottid ſhouldè be
If in this forme I ſhouldè with you wende;
Ne though I lived unto the worldis ende
My name ſhould I nevir ayenward winne: 1581
Thus were I loſt, and that were routh and ſinne.

And forthy fle with reson al this hete;
Men saine, *The suffraunt overcometh parde,*
Eke *Who so wol have lefe he lefe mote lete:*
Thus makith vertue of necessite
By pacience, and thinke that lorde is he
Of Fortune aie that naught woll of her retch,
And she ne dauntith no wight but a wretch.

And trustith this, that certis, hertè swete!
Or Phœbus sustir, Lucina the shene,
The Lion passith out of this Arite
I woll ben here withoutin any wene;
I mene, as helpe me Juno, hevin's quene,
The tenth daie, but if that deth me assaile,
I woll you sene withoutin any faile.

And now, so this be sothe (quod Troilus)
I shall well suffre unto the tenth daie,
Sens that I se that nede it mote ben thus;
But for the love of God, if it be maie,
So let us stelin privily awaie,
For evre' in one as for to live in rest,
Mine hertè saieth that it woll be the best.

O mercie, God! what life is this? (quod she)
Alas! ye slea me thus for very tene;
I se well now that ye mistrustin me,
For by your wordis it is well isene:
Now for the love of Cynthia the shene
Mistrust me nat thus causèlesse for routh,
Sens to be true I have you plight my trouth.

And thinkith wel that ſomtime it is wit
To ſpendin a time a time for to win;
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet,
Though that we ben a daie or two atwin:
Drive out tho fantaſies you have within,
And truſtith me, and levith eke your ſorow,
Or here my trouth, I wol nat live til morow:

For if ye wiſt how ſore it doeth me ſmerte
Ye wouldè ceſſe of this; for God thou woſt
The pure ſpirite ywepith in mine herte
To ſene you wepin whiche that I love moſt,
And that I mote gon to the Grekis hoſte;
Ye, n'ere it that I wiſt a remedie
To come ayen right here I wouldè die.

But certis I am not ſo nice a wight
That I ne can imaginin a waie
To come ayen that daie that I have hight,
For who maie holden' a thing that wol awaie?
My fathir naught, for all his queinte plaie;
And by my thrift my wending out of Troie
Anothir daie ſhall tourne us all to joie.

Forthy with all mine herte I you beſeke,
If that you liſt doen aught for my praiere,
And for the love whiche that I love you eke,
That er that I departin fro you here
That of ſo gode a comfort and a chere
I maie you ſene that ye maie bring at reſt
Mine hertè, whiche is at the poinct to breſt.

And ore al this I praie you, quod she tho,
Mine ownè hert'is sothfast suffisaunce!
Sith I am thine all whole withoutin mo,
That while that I am absent no plesaunce
Of othir doe me fro your remembraunce,
For I am er agast; for why? men rede
That love is thing aie full of busie drede. 1645

For in this worlde there livith ladie none,
If that ye were untrue, as God defende!
That so betrayid were or wo begon
As I, that allè trouthe in you entende;
And doutèless if that I othir wende
I n'ere but dedde, and er ye cause yfinde
For Godd'is love so beth me naught unkinde. 1652

To this answerid Troilus, and seide,
Now God, to whom there n'is no cause iwrie,
Me glad, as wis I nevir to Creseide,
Sithe thilkè daie I sawe her first with eye,
Was false, ne nevir shall till that I die:
At short wordis, well ye maie me bileve;
I can no more; it shall be founde at preve. 1659

Graunt mercy, gode hert mine! iwis, (quod she)
And, blisful Venus! let me nevir sterve
Er I maie stonde of plesaunce in degre
To quite him well that so well can deserve,
And while that God my wit will me conserve
I shall so doen, so true I have you found,
That aie honour to me ward shall rebounde: 1666

For truſtith well that your eſtate roiall,
Ne veine delite, nor onely worthineſſe
Of you in werre or turnaie marciall,
Ne pompe, arraie, nobley, or eke richeſſe,
Ne madin me to rue on your diſtreſſe,
But morall vertue, groundid upon trouth,
That was the cauſe I firſt had on you routh: 1673

Eke gentle hert, and manhode that ye had,
And that ye had (as me thought) in diſpite
Evèry thing that ſownid into bad,
As rudèneſſe, and pepliſhe appetite,
And that your reſon bridlid your delite;
This made abovin evèry creture
That I was yours, and ſhall while I maie dure. 1680

And this may length of yeris nat fordoe,
Ne remuable Fortunè deface,
But Jupiter, that of his might maie doe
The ſorowfull be glad, ſo yeve us grace
Er nightis tenne to metin in this place,
So that it maie your herte and mine ſuffiſe:
And fare now well, for time is that ye riſe. 1687

And aftir that thei long iplainid had,
And oft ikiſt, and ſtraite in armis folde,
The daie gan riſe, and Troilus him clad,
And rufully his ladie gan behold,
As he that felt of deth'is caris cold,
And to her grace he gan him recommaunde;
Where he was wo this holde I no demaunde: 1694

For mann'is hedde imaginin ne can,
Ne' entendèment considir, ne tongue tell,
The cruill painis of this wofull man,
That passin every tourment doune in hell;
For whan he sawe that she ne might ydwell,
Whiche that his soule out of his body rent,
Withoutin more out of the chambre' he went.

Explicit liber quartus.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

APROCHIN gan the fatall destine
That Jovis hath in disposicioun,
And to you angrie Parcæ, sustrin thre,
Committith to doen execucioun,
For whiche Cresseidè must out of the toun,
And Troilus shall dwellin forth in pine
Till Lachesis his threde no lengir twine.

The goldin tressid Phœbus high on loft
Thryis had allè with his bemis clere
The snowis molte, and Zephirus as oft
Ibrought ayen the tendir levis grene,
Sens that the sonne of Hecuba the Quene
Began to love her first, for whom his sorowe
Was all that she departin should amorowe.

Full redy was at primè Diomede
Creſeide unto the Grekis hoſte to lede,
For ſorowe' of whiche ſhe felt her hertè blede,
As ſhe that ne wiſt what was beſt to rede:
And truily, as men in bokis rede,
Men wiſtè nevir woman have the care,
Ne was ſo lothe out of a toune to fare:

This Troilus withoutin rede or lore,
As man that hath his joyis eke forlore,
Was waiting on his ladie evirmore,
As ſhe that was the ſothfaſt croppe and more
Of all his luſt or joyis heretofore;
But Troilus, now farwell all thy joie!
For ſhalt thou nevir ſene her eft in Troie.

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere
He gan his wo full manly for to hide,
That well unneth it ſene was in his chere,
But at the yatè there ſhe ſhould out ride
With certain folke he hovid her to' abide,
So wo bigon, all would he not him plain,
That on his hors unneth he ſate for pain.

For ire he quoke, ſo gan his hertè gnawe,
Whan Diomede on hors gan him to dreſſe,
And ſaied unto himſelf this ilkè ſawe;
Alas! (quod he) this foule a wretchidneſſe
Why ſuffre' I it? why n'ill I it redreſſe?
Were it nat bet at onis for to die
Than evirmore in langour thus to drie?

Why n'ill I make at onis riche and pore
To have inough to doen er that ſhe go?
Why n'ill I bring all Troie upon a rore?
Why n'ill I ſlaen this Diomede alſo?
Why n'ill I rathir with a man or two
Stele her awaie? Why woll I this endure?
Why n'ill I helpin to mine ownè cure?

But why he n'oldè doen ſo fell a dede
That ſhall I ſain, and why him liſt it ſpare:
He had in herte alwaie a manir drede
Leſt that Creſeide, in rumour of this fare,
Should have ben ſlain: lo! this was al his care,
And ellis certain, as I ſayid yore,
He had it doen withoutin wordis more.

Creſeidè, whan ſhe redy was to ride,
Full ſorowfully ſighed, and ſaied Alas!
But forthe ſhe mote for aught that maie betide,
And forthe ſhe ritte a full ſebirly paſe;
There is none othir remedy' in this caſe:
What wondir is though that her ſore ſmert
Whan ſhe forgoith her owne ſwetè herte?

This Troilus in giſe of curtiſie,
With hauke on hond, and with an hugè rout
Of knightis, rode and did her companie,
Ypaſſing all the valey ferre without,
And ferthir would have riddin out of doubt
Full faine, and wo was him to gone ſo ſone,
But tourne he muſt, and it was eke ſo doen.

And right with that was Antenor icome
Out of the Grekis hoſte, and every wight
Was of him glad, and ſaied he was welcome;
And Troilus, all n'ere his hertè light,
He painid him with all his fullè might
Him to withholde of weping at the leſt,
And Antenor he kiſt, and made grete feſt. 77

And therwithall he muſt his leve ytake,
And caſt his eye upon her pitouſly,
And nere he rode, his cauſè for to make,
To take her by the honde all ſobirlie;
And Lorde! ſo ſhe gan wepin tendirlie,
And he full ſoft and ſlighly gan her ſeie,
Now holde your daie, and doe me not to deie. 84

With that his courſir tournid he about
With face full pale, and unto Diomede
No worde he ſpake, ne none of all his rout,
Of whiche the ſonne of Tydeus toke hede,
As he that kouthè morè than the crede
In ſoche a craft, and by the rain her hent,
And Troilus to Troie homwardis went. 91

This Diomede, that lad her by the bridell,
Whan that he ſawe the folke of Troie awaie,
Thought all my labor ſhall not ben on idell
If that I maie, for ſomwhat ſhall I ſaie,
For at the worſt it ſhortin maie our waie;
I have herd ſaie eke timis twiſè twelve
He is a fole that woll foryete him ſelve. 98

But nathèleſſe this thought he well inough,
That certainly I am aboutin naught
If that I ſpeke of love or make it tought,
For doutileſs if ſhe have in her thought
Him that I geſſe he maie not ben ibrought
So ſone awaie; but I ſhall finde a mene
That ſhe nat yet wete ſhall what that I mene. 105

This Diomede, as he that could his gode,
Whan this was doen gan fallin forth in ſpeche
Of this and that, and aſkin why ſhe ſtode
In ſoche diſeſe? and gan her eke beſeche,
That if that he encreſin might or eche
With any thing her eſe that ſhe ſhould
Commaunde it him, and ſaid he doen it would: 112

For truily he ſwore her as a knight
That ther n'as thing with which he might her pleſe
That he n'olde doen his pain and al his might
To doen it, for to doen her herte an eſe,
And prayid her ſhe would her ſorowe' apeſe,
And ſaied, Iwis we Grekis can have joie
To honoure you as well as folke of Troie. 119

He ſaid eke thus, I wot you thinkith ſtraunge,
No wondir is, for it is to you newe,
Th' acqueintaunce of theſe Trojans for to chaunge
For folke of Grece, which that ye nevir knewe;
But wouldè nevir God but if as true
A Greke ye ſhould emong us all yfinde
As any Trojan is, and eke as kinde. 126

And by the cauſe I ſwore you, lo! right now
To ben your frende, and help you to my might,
And for that more acqueintaunce eke of you
Have I had than anothir ſtraungir wight,
So fro this forth I praie you daie and night
Commaundith me, how ſore ſo that me ſmerte,
To doen all that maie like unto your herte:

And that ye me wold as your brothir trete,
And takith not my frendſhip in diſpite;
And though your ſorowes ben for thingis grete,
N'ot I nat why, but out of more reſpite
Mine hert hath for to' amende it grete delite,
And if I maie your harmis nat redreſſe
I am right ſorie for your hevineſſe:

For though ye Trojans with us Grekis wroth
Have many' a daie ben, alwaie yet parde
O god of Love in ſothe we ſervin bothe:
And for the love of God, my ladie fre,
Whom ſo ye hate as beth not wroth with me,
For truily there can no wight you ſerve
That halfe ſo loth your wrathè would deſerve.

And n'ere it that we ben ſo nere the tent
Of Calchas, whiche that ſene us bothè maie,
I would of this you tell all mine entent;
But this enſelid till anothir daie:
Yeve me your honde; I am and ſhall be aie,
God help me ſo, while that my life maie dure,
Your owne abovin evèry creture.

Thus said I nere er now to woman borne,
For God mine herte as wisely gladè so
I lovid nevir woman here beforne
As paramours, ne nevir shall no mo;
And for the love of God be not my so,
All can I not to you, my ladie dere!
Complain aright, for I am yet to lere. 161

And wondrith nought, mine ownè lady bright!
Though that I speke of love to you thus blive,
For I have herd or this of many' a wight
That lovid thing he nere saw in his live;
Eke I am not of powir for to strive
Ayenst the god of Love, but him obaie
I woll alwaie, and mercie I you praie. 168

There beth so worthy knightis in this place,
And ye so faire, that everiche of 'hem all
Woll painin him to stondin in your grace;
But might to me so faire a grace befall
That ye me for your servaunt wouldè call,
So lowly ne so truily you serve
N'ill none of 'hem as I shall till I sterve. 175

Creseide unto that purpose lite answerde,
As she that was with sorowe' oppressid so
That in effect she naught his talis herde,
But here and there now here a worde or two;
Her thought her sorowfull herte brast atwo,
For whan she gan her fathir ferre espie
Well nigh doune of her hors she gan to sie. 182

But nathèleſſe ſhe thonkith Diomede
Of all his travaile and his godè chere,
And that him liſt his frendſhip to her bede,
And ſhe acceptith it in gode manere,
And woll do fain that is him leſe and dere,
And truſtin him ſhe would, and well ſhe might,
As ſayid ſhe, and from her hors ſhe' alight. 189

Her fathir hath her in his armis nome,
And twentie times he kiſt his doughtir ſwete,
And ſaied, O derè doughtir mine! welcome.
She ſaid eke ſhe was fain with him to mete,
And ſtode forth ſtill, mild, muet, and manſuete.
But here I leve her with her fathir dwell,
And forthe I woll of Troilus you tell. 196

To Troſe is come this wofull Troilus
In ſorowe abovin all ſorowes ſmert,
With felon loke and with face diſpitous,
Tho ſodainly doune from his hors he ſtert,
And through his paleyſe with a ſwollin hert
To chambir went; of nothing toke he hede,
Ne none to him dare ſpeke o worde for drede. 203

And there his ſorowes that he ſparid had
He yave an iſſue large, and Deth he cride,
And in his throwis frenetike and mad
He curſith Jove, Apollo, and Cupide,
He curſith Bachus, Ceres, and Cypride,
His birthe, himſelf, his fate, and eke Nature,
And ſave his ladie evèry creture. 210

To bed he goth, and weilith there and turneth
In furie as doeth Ixion in hell,
And in this wise he nigh till daie sojourneth,
But tho began his herte alite unswell
Through teris which that gonnin up to wel,
And pitously he cried upon Creseide,
And to himself right thus he spake and seide: 217

Where is mine ownè ladie lefe and dere?
Where is her whitè brest? where is it? where?
Where ben her armis and her eyin clere
That yesterdaie this timè with me were?
Now maie I wepe alone many a tere,
And graspe about I maie, but in this place
Save a pilowe I find naught to embrace. 224

How shall I doen? whan shall she come again?
I n'ot, alas! Why let I her so go?
As wouldè God I had as tho be slain!
O herte mine, Creseidè! o swetè so!
O ladie mine! that I love and no mo,
To whom for evirmore mine herte I vowe,
Se how I die; ye n'ill me not rescowe! 231

Who seith you now, my right lodèsterre?
Who sittith now or stant in your presence?
Who can comfortin now your hert'is werre,
Now I am gon whom ye yeve audience?
Who spekith for me now in my absence?
Alas! no wight, and that is all my care,
For well wote I as ill as I ye fare. 238

How ſhould I thus ten dayis full endure
When I the firſt night havin all this tene?
And how ſhall ſhe eke, ſorowfull creture,
For tendirneſſe how ſhall ſhe this ſuſtene
Soche wo for me? o! pitous, pale, and grene,
Shall woxin ben her freſhe womanly face
For langour er ſhe tourne unto this place. 245

And whan he fill in any ſlombringis
Anon begin he ſhouldè for to grone,
And dremin of the dredfulliſt thingis
That might yben, as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone,
Or metin that he was emongis all
His enemies, and in their hondis fall. 252

And therewithall his bodie ſhouldè ſterte,
And with the ſtarte all ſodainly awake,
And ſoche a tremour felè about his herte,
That of the fere his bodie ſhouldè quake,
And therewithall he ſhould a noiſe ymake,
And ſemin as though he ſhould fallin depe,
From high aloft, and than he wouldè wepe, 259

And rewin on himſelf ſo pitouſly
That wondir was to here his fantaſie;
Anothir time he ſhouldè mightily
Comfort himſelf, and ſain it was folie
So cauſeleſſe ſoche drede and wo to drie,
And eft begin his aſpre ſorowes newe,
That every man might on his painis rewe. 266

Who could tell all aright, or full diſcrive
His wo, his plaint, his langour, and his pine?
Nat all the men that han or ben on live:
Thou, Redir, maieſt thy ſelf full well devine
That ſoche a wo my wit can not define;
On idell for to write it ſhould I ſwinke
Whan that my wit is werie it to thinke. 273

On hevin yet the ſteris werin ſene,
Although full pale iwoxin was the mone,
And whitin began the horizon ſhene
All eſtwardis, as it is wont to doen,
And Phœbus with his roſie cartè ſone
Gan aftir that to dreſſe him up to fare
Whan Troilus hath ſent aftir Pandare. 280

This Pandare, that of all the daie beforne
Ne might have comin Troilus to ſe,
Although that he on his hedde it had ſworne,
For with the King Priam al daie was he,
So that it laie nat in his liberte
No where to gon, but on the morowe' he went
To Troilus, whan that he for him ſent; 287

For in his herte he couldè well devine
That Troilus all night for ſorowe woke,
And that he wouldè tell him of his pine;
This knewe he well inough withoutin boke;
For which to chambir ſtreight the way he toke,
And Troilus tho ſobirly he grette,
And on the bedde full ſone he gan him ſette. 294

My Pandarus! (quod Troilus) the sorowe
Whiche that I drie I maie not long endure;
I trowe I shall not livin till to morowe;
For whiche I would alwaies on avinture
To the devisin of my sepoulture
The forme, and of my movble thou dispone
Right as the semith best is for to doen:

But of the fire and flambè funèrall
In whiche my body brennin shall to glede,
And of the fest and playis Palestrall
At my vigile I praie the take gode hede
That that be well, and offir Mars my stede,
My swerde, mine helme, and, levè brothir dere!
My shelde to Pallas yeve that shinith clere;

The poudre' in which min hert ibrend shal turn
That praie I the thou take, and it conserve
In a vessell that men clepith an Urne,
Of golde, and to my lady that I serve,
For love of whom thus pitously I sterve,
So yeve it her, and doe me this plesaunce
To praie her kepe it for a remembraunce:

For well I felin by my maladie,
And by my dremis now and yore ago,
All certainly that I mote nedis die;
The oule eke whiche that hight Ascalapho
Hath aftir me shright all these nightis two:
And god Merc'urie, now of me woful wretch
The soulè guide, and whan the list it fetche.

Pandare anſwerid and ſaied, Troilus,
My derè frende! as I have told the yore
That it is folie for to ſorowen thus,
And cauſèleſſe, for whiche I can no more,
But who ſo woll not trowin rede ne lore
I can not ſene in him no remedie,
But let him worchin with his fantaſie.

But, Troilus, I praie the tell me now
If that thou trowe er this that any wight
Hath lovid paramours as well as thou?
Ye, God wot, and fro many' a worthie knight
Hath his ladie forgon a fourtènight
And he nat yet made halvindele the fare;
What nede is the to makin all this care?

Sens daie by daie thou maieſt thy ſelvin ſe
That from his love or ellis from his wife
A man mote twinnin of neceſſite,
Ye, though he love her as his ownè life,
Yet n'ill he with himſelf thus makin ſtrife;
For well thou woſt, my levè brothir dere!
That alwaie frendis maie not ben iſere.

How doen this folke that ſene ther lovis wedded
By frendis might, as it betidith oft,
And ſene 'hem in ther ſpouſis bedde ibedded?
God wote thei take it wiſely faire and ſoft;
For why? gode hope halt up ther herte aloft,
And for thei can a time of ſorowe' endure;
As time 'hem hurtith a time doeth 'hem cure.

So shouldist thou endure, and lettin slide
The time, and fondè to ben glad and light;
Tenne dayis n'is not so long to abide;
And sens she to comin the hath behight
She n'ill her hest brekin for any wight,
For drede the nat that she n'ill finde a waie
To come ayen, my life that durst I laie. 357

Thy swevines eke, and all soche fantasie,
Drive out, and let 'hem farin to mischaunce,
For thei procede of thy melancolie,
That doeth the sele in slepe all this penaunce:
A strawe for all swevenis signifiaunce!
God helpe me so! I coumpt 'hem not a bene;
There wot no man aright what dremis mene. 364

For prestis of the temple tellin this,
That dremis ben the revelacions
Of goddis, and als well thei tell iwis
That thei ben infernalle illusions,
And lechis saine that of complections
Procedin thei, of fast or glotonie:
Who wot in sothe thus what thei signifie? 371

Eke othir sain that through impressions,
As if a wight hath fast a thing in minde,
That thereof comith soche avisions;
And othir sain, as thei in bokis finde,
That aftir timis of the yere by kinde
Men dreme, and that th' effect goth by the mone:
But leve no dreme, for it is nat to doen. 378

Well worth of dremis aie theſe oldè wives;
And truly eke augurie of theſe foulis,
For fere of which men wenin leſe ther lives,
As ravin's qualm, or ſchriching of theſe oulis,
To trowin on it bothè falſe and foule is:
Alas! alas! that ſo noble' a creture
As is a man ſhould dredin ſoche ordure! 385

For whiche with all mine hert I the beſeche
Unto thy ſelf that all this thou foryeve;
And riſe now up, withoutin morè ſpeche,
And let us caſt how forth maie beſt be drive
The time, and eke how freſhly we maie live
Whan ſhe comith, the which ſhall be right ſone;
God helpe me ſo the beſt is thus to doen. 392

Riſe, let us ſpeke of luſtie life in Troie
That we have lad, and forth the timè drive,
And eke of timè coming us rejoie,
That bringin ſhall our bliſſè now ſo blive,
And langour of theſe twiſè dayis five
We ſhall therwith ſo foryet or oppreſſe
That well unneth it doen ſhall us dureſſe. 399

This toune is full of lordis all about,
And truis laſtith all this mene while;
Go we playin us in ſome luſtie rout,
To Sarpedon, not hennis but a mile,
And thus thou ſhalt the timè well begile,
And drive it forth unto that bliſfull morowe
That thou her ſe that cauſe is of thy ſorowe. 406

Now riſe, my derè brothir Troilus!
For certis it non honour is to the
To wepe, and in thy bedde to roukin thus,
For truily of o thing truſt to me,
If thou thus ligge a daie, or two, or thre,
The folke wol wene that thou for cowardiſe
The fainiſt ſick, and that thou darſt not riſe. 413

This Troilus anſwerde, O brothir dere!
This knowin folke that have iſuffrid pain,
That though he wepe and make ſorowfull chere
That felith harme and ſmerte in every vain
No wondir is; and though I evir plain
Or alwaie wepe I am nothing to blame,
Sens I have loſt the cauſe of al my game. 420

But ſithins of fine force I mote ariſe
I ſhall ariſe as ſone as er I maie,
And God, to whom mine herte I ſacrifice,
So ſende us haſtily the tennith daie,
For was there nevir foule ſo faine of Maie
As I ſhall ben whan ſhe comith in Troie
That cauſe is of my tourment and my joie. 427

But whidir is thy rede, (quod Troilus)
That we maie plaie us beſt in all in this toun?
By God my counſaile is (quod Pandarus)
To ride and plaie us with King Sarpedoun.
So long of this thei ſpekin up and doun
Till Troilus gan at the laſt aſſent
To riſe, and forth to Sarpedon thei went. 434

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was all his live, and full of hie proweſſe,
With all that might iſervid ben on table
That deinte was, all coſte it grete richeſſe,
He fedde 'hem daie by daie, that ſoche nobleſſe,
As ſaidin bothe the moſte and eke the leſt,
Was nere er that daie wiſte at any feſt:

Nor in this worlde there is none inſtrument
Delicious through winde or touch on corde,
As ferre as any wight hath er iwent,
That tongè tell or hertè maie recorde
But at that feſt it was well herd acorde,
Ne' of ladies eke ſo faire a companie
On daunce er tho was never ſene with eye.

But what availith this to Troilus,
That, for his ſorowe nothing of it rought,
But evir in one his hertè pitous
Full buſily Creſeide his ladie ſought?
On her was evir all that his herte thought,
Now this now that ſo faſt imagining
That gladin iwis can him no feſting.

Theſe ladies eke that at this feſtè bene,
Sens that he ſawe his ladie was awaie,
It was his ſorowe on 'hem for to ſene,
Or for to here on inſtrumentis plaie;
For ſhe that of his hert berith the kaie
Was abſent, lo! this was his fantaſie,
That no wight ſhouldè makin melodie:

Nor there n'as hour in all the daie or night,
Whan he was there as no man might him here,
That he ne ſaied, O loveſome ladie bright!
How have ye farin ſins that ye were there?
Welcome iwis, mine ownè ladie dere!
But welawaie! all this n'as but a maſe;
Fortune his love entendid but to glaſe. 469

The lettirs eke that ſhe of oldè time
Had him iſent he would alone irede
An hundrid ſithe atwixtin none and prime,
Refiguring her ſhape and womanhede
Within his hert, and every worde and dede
That paſſid was; and thus he drove to' an ende
The ferthè day, and thennis wolde he wende; 476

And ſaidè, Levè brothir Pandarus!
Intendiſt thou that we ſhall here byleve
Til Sarpedon wol forth conveyin us?
Yet were it fairir that we toke our leve;
For Godd'is love let us now ſone at eve
Our levè take, and homwarde let us tourne,
For trewèly I n'il nat thus ſojourne. 483

Pandare anſwerid, Be we comin hither
To fetchin fire and rennin home again?
God helpe me ſo I can nat tellin whither
We mightin gone, if I ſhal ſothly ſaine,
There any wight is of us morè faine
Than Sarpedon; and if we hennis hie
Thus ſodainly I holde it vilanie; 490

Sith that we ſeydin we wouldin byleve
With him a weke, and now thus ſodainly
The ferthè day to take of him our leve,
He wouldè wondrin on it trewèly:
Let us holde forth our purpoſe fermèly,
And ſens that ye behightin him to' abide
Holde forwarde now, and aftir let us ride.

This Pandarus with mochil pine and wo
Made him to dwel; and at the wek'is ende
Of Sarpedon thei toke ther leve to go,
And on ther way they ſpedin 'hem to wende.
(Quod Troilus) Now, Lorde, me gracè ſende
That I maie findin at mine home-comming
Creſeide comin, and therwith gan he ſing.

Ye halif wodè thought ywis Pandare,
And to him ſelfe ful ſoſtily he ſeide,
God wote refroidin may this hottè fare
Er Calcas ſendè Troilus Creſeide:
But nathèleſſe he japid thus, and ſeide,
And ſwore iwis, his hert him wel behight
She wouldin come as ſone as er ſhe might.

Whan thei unto the paleis were icomen
Of Troilus thei doun of horſe alight,
And to the chambre ther waie have thei nommen,
And unto timè that it gan to night
Thei ſpekin of Creſeide the lady bright,
And aftir this, whan that 'hem bothe leſte,
Thei ſpede 'hem fro the ſuppir unto reſt.

On morow'as sone as day began to clere
This Troilus gan of his slepe to'abreide,
And to Pandarus his owne brothir dere,
For love of God, ful pitously he seide,
As go we sene the paleis of Creseide,
For sens we yet maie have none othir fest
So let us sene her paleis at the lest! 525

And therwithall his meinè for to blende
A cause he fonde into the toun to go,
And to Creseid'is paleis thei gon wende;
But Lorde! this sely Troilus was wo,
Him thought his sorouful hert brast atwo,
For when he saw her doris sperrid all
Wel nigh for sorow'adoun he gan to fall. 532

Therwith when he was ware, and gan behold
How shet was every window of the place,
As frost him thought his hert began to cold,
For whiche with chaungid dedly palè face
Withoutin worde he forth by gan to pace,
And as God would he gan so fast to ride
That no wight of his countinaunce aspide. 539

Than saide he thus; O paleis desolate!
O house of housis whilom best ydight!
O paleis empty and disconsolate!
O thou lanterne, of which queint is the light!
O paleis whilom day, that now art night!
Wel oughtist thou to fal and I to die
Sens she is went that wont was us to gie. 546

O paleis whilom croune of houſis al!
Enluminid with ſunne of allè bliſſe,
O ring, of whiche the rubie is out fall!
O cauſe of wo that cauſe haſt ben of bliſſe!
Yet ſens I may no bet faine would I kiſſe
Thy coldè doris, durſt I for this route;
And farwel ſhrine of whiche the ſaint is out!

Therwith he caſt on Pandarus his eie
With chaungid face, and pitous to beholde,
And whan he might his time aright aſpie
Aie as he rode to Pandarus he tolde
His newe ſorow, and eke his joyis olde,
So pitouſly, and with ſo ded an hewe,
That every wight might on his ſorow rewe.

Fro thinnis forth he ridith up and doune,
And every thing came him to remembraunce
As he rode forth by placis of the toune
In whiche he whilom had all his pleſaunce;
Lo! yondir ſaw I mine owne lady daunce,
And in that temple with her eyin clere
Me captive caught firſt my right lady dere:

And yondir have I herde ful luſtily
My dere hert Creſeide laugh, and yondir plaie
Sawe I her onis eke ful blisfully,
And yondir onis to me gan ſhe ſaie,
Now, gode ſwete! lovith me wel I you praye;
And yonde ſo godely gan ſhe me beholde
That to the deth mine hert is to her holde:

And at the cornir in the yondir houſe
Herde I mine aldirleviſt lady dere
So womanly with voice melodiouſe
Singin ſo wel, ſo godely and ſo clere,
That in my ſoule yet me thinkith I here
The bliſful ſowne, and in that yondir place
My lady firſt me toke unto her grace. 581

Than thought he thus, O bliſfull Lorde Cupide!
Whan I the proceſſe have in memorie
How thou me haſt weried on every ſide
Men might a boke make of it like a ſtorie;
What nede is the to ſeke on me victorie
Sens I am thine and wholly at thy will?
What joy haſt thou thine ownè folke to ſpill? 588

Wel haſt thou, Lorde, iwroke on me thine ire,
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to greve;
Now mercy, Lorde! thou woſt wel I deſire
Thy gracè moſte of allè luſtis leve,
And live and die I wol in thy beleve,
For whiche I ne' aſke in guerdon but a bone,
That thou Creſeide aien me ſendè ſone. 595

Diſtrainin her hert as faſt to returne
As thou doeſt mine to longin her to ſe,
Than wote I wel that ſhe n'il nat ſojourne:
Now bliſful Lorde! ſo cruil thou ne be
Unto the blode of Troie, I praiè the,
As Juno was unto the blode Thebane,
For whiche the folke of Thebis caught ther bane. 602

And aftir this he to the yatis wente
Ther as Creſeide out rode a full gode paas,
And up and doun there made he many' a wente,
And to him ſelfe ful oft he ſaid, Alas!
Fro hennis rode my bliſſe and my ſolas:
As wouldè bliſful God now for his joie
I might her ſene ayen comin to Troie! 609

And to the yondir hil I gan her gide,
Alas! and there I toke of her my leve,
And yonde I ſawe her to her fathir ride,
For ſorow of whiche mine hert ſhal to cleve,
And hithir home I came whan it was eve,
And here I dwel, out caſt from allè joie,
And ſhal, til I maie ſene her efte in Troie. 616

And of him ſelfe imaginid he ofte
To ben defaitid, pale, and woxin leſſe
Than he was wonte, and that men ſaidin ſofte
What may it be? who can the ſothè geſſe
Why Troilus hath al this hevineſſe?
And al this n'as but his melancolie,
That he had of him ſelfe ſuche fantaſie. 623

Anothir time imaginin he would
That evèry wight that went by the wey
Had of him routhe, and that thei ſainè ſhould
I am right ſory Troilus wol dey:
And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey,
As ye have herde: ſuche life gan he to lede
As he that ſtode betwixin hope and drede: 630

For which him likid in his songis shewe
Th' enchefon of his wo as he best might,
And made a songe of wordis but a fewe,
Somwhat his wofull hertè for to light,
And whan he was from every mann'is sight
With softè voice he of his lady dere,
That absent was, gan sing as ye maie here: 637

O sterre! of whiche I lost have all the light,
With hertè sore wel ought I to bewaile
That evir derke in turment, night by night,
Towarde my deth with winde I stere and saile,
For whiche the tennith night if that I faile
The giding of thy bemis bright an houre
My ship and me Carybdis woll devoure. 644

This songè when he thus songin had sone
He fil aien into his sighis olde,
And every night, as was his wont to done,
He stodè the bright monè to beholde,
And al his sorowe he to the mone tolde,
And said, Iwis whan thou art hornid newe
I shal be glad if al the world be trewe. 651

I saw thine hornis olde eke by that morow
Whan hennis rode my bright lady dere,
That cause is of my turment and my sorow,
For whichè, o bright Lucina the clere!
For love of God ren fast about thy sphere,
For whan thine hornis newe ginnin to spring
Than shal she come that maie my blisse ybring. 658

The daie is more and lengir every night
Than thei ben wont to be, him thoughtè tho,
And that the ſunnè went his courſe unright
By lengir waie than it was wonte to go,
And ſaid, Iwis I drede me evirmo
The ſunn'is ſonne Phaeton be on live,
And that his fathir's carre amiſſe he drive.

Upon the wallis faſt eke would he walke,
And on the Grekis hoſt he would yſe,
And to him ſelfe right thus he would ytalke;
Lo! yondir is mine ownè lady fre,
Or ellis yondir there the tentis be,
And thence comith this ayre that is ſo ſote,
That in my ſoule I fele it doth me bote.

And hardily this winde that more and more
Thus ſtoundèmele encreſith in my face
Is of my ladies depè ſighis ſore;
I preve it thus, for in none othir ſpace
Of al this toun, ſave onely in this place,
Fele I no winde that ſounith ſo like paine,
It ſaith Alas! why twinid be we twaine?

This longè time he drivith forth right thus,
Til fully paſſid was the ninthè night,
And aie beſide him was this Pandarus,
That beſily did allè his full might
Him to comfort and make his hertè light,
Yeving him hope alway the tenthè morow
That ſhe ſhal comen and ſtintin al his ſorow.

Upon that othir side eke was Creseide
With women fewe among the Grekis strong,
For whiche ful oft a day Alas! she seide,
That I was borne! wel maie mine hertè long
Aftir my deth, for now live I to long;
Alas! and I ne may it not amende,
For now is worse than evir yet I wende.

My father n'il for nothing do me grace
To gone ayen for aught I can him queme,
And if so be that I my termè pace
My Troilus, alas! shal in his hert deme
That I am false, and so it maie wel seme;
Thus shal I have unthonke on every side:
That I was borne so welaway the tide!

And if that I me put in jeopardie
To stele awaie by night, and it befal
That I be caught I shal be holde a spie,
Or ellis, lo! this drede I most of al,
If in the hondis of some wretche I fal
I n'am but lost, al be mine hertè trewe:
Now mighty God thou on my sorow rewe!

Ful pale iwoxin was her brightè face,
Her limmis lene, as she that al the daie
Stode whan she durst, and lokid on the place
There she was borne, and she had dwellid aye;
And al the night weping, alas! she laie;
And thus dispeirid out of allè cure
She lad her life this sorowfull creture.

Ful oft a daie she sighed eke for distresse,
And in her selfe she went aie purtraying
Of Troilus the gretè worthinesse,
And al his godely wordis recording
Sens first that daie her love began to spring;
And thus she sette her wofull hert afire
Through remembraunce of that she gan desire. 721

In all this world there n'is so cruil hert
That her had herd complainin in her sorow
That n'old have wepin for her painis smert;
So tendirly she wept both eve and morow
Her nedid not no teres for to borow;
And this was yet the worst of all her paine,
Ther was no wight to whom she durst complaine. 728

Ful rewfully she lokid upon Troie,
Behelde the touris high and eke the hallis;
Alas! (quod she) the plesaunce and the joie,
The whiche that now al turnid into gal is,
Have I had oftin within yondir wallis!
O Troilus! what doest thou now? she seide;
Lord, whethir thou yet think upon Creseide! 735

Alas! that I ne' had trowid on your lore,
And went with you, as ye me redde er this,
Than had I now not sighid halfe so sore:
Who might have said that I had don amis
To stele awaie with suche one as he is?
But al to late comith the lectuarie
Whan men the corse unto the gravè carie. 742

To late is now to ſpeke of that matere;
Prudence, alas! one of thine eyin thre
Me lackid alway er that I came here,
For on time paſſid wel remembrid me,
And preſent time eke coulde I wel yſe,
But future time, er I was in the ſnare,
Could I not ſene, that cauſith now my care. 749

But nathèleſſe, betide what may betide,
I ſhal to morow' at night, by eſt or weſt,
Out of this hoſte ſtele on ſome manir ſide,
And gon with Troilus where as him leſt;
This purpoſe wol I holde, and this is beſt;
No force of wickid tongis jonglerie,
For er on love have wretchis had envie: 756

For who ſo wol of every worde take hede,
Or rulin him by every wight'is wit,
Ne ſhal he nevir thrivin out of drede,
For that that ſome men blamin ever yet
Lo othir manir folke commendin it;
And as for me, for al ſuche variaunce
Felicite clepe I my ſuffiſaunce. 763

For whiche, withoutin any wordis mo,
To Troie I wol, as for concluſioun.
But God it wote er fully monthis two
She was ful ferre fro that entencioun,
For bothè Troilus and Troiè toun
Shall knotèleſſe throughout her hertè ſlide,
For ſhe wol take a purpoſe for to' abide. 770

This Diomede of whom I you tel gan,
Goth now within himſelfe aie arguing,
With al the ſleight and al that er he can,
How he maie beſt with ſhortiſt tarying
Into his nette Creſeid'is hertè bring;
To this entent he couthè nevir fine;
To fiſhin her he laide out hoke and line.

But nathèleſſe wel in his hert he thought
That ſhe n'as nat without a love in Troie,
For nevír ſithin he her thennis brought
Ne couthe he ſene hèr laugh or makin joie;
He n'iſt how beſt her hert for to acoie,
But for t'aſſey he ſaid nought it ne greveth,
For *He that naught aſſayith naught atcheveth.*

Yet ſaid he to him ſelfe upon a night,
Now am I nat a ſole that wote wel howe
Her woe is for love of anothir wight
And herupon to gon aſſaie her nowe?
I maie well wete it n'il nat ben my prowe,
For wiſè folke in bokis it expreſſe,
Men ſhal nat wowe a wight in hevineſſe.

But who ſo might ywinnin ſuche a floure
Fro him for whom ſhe mournith night and daie
He might wel ſaine he were a conqueroure;
And right anone, as he that bold was aie,
Thought in his hert, happin what happin may,
Al ſhould I die I wol her hertè ſeche,
I ſhal no morè leſin but my ſpeche.

This Diomede, as bokis us declare,
Was in his nedis preſt and corageous,
With ſternè voice, and mighty limmis ſquare,
Hardy and teſtife, ſtrong and chevalrous,
Of dedis like his fathir Tydèus;
And ſome men ſaine he was of tongè large,
And heire he was of Calydon and Arge. 805

Creſeidè mene ywas of her ſtature,
Therto of ſhape, of face, and eke of chere,
There ne mightin ben no fairir creture;
And oftin timis this was her manere
To gone itreſſid with her heris clere
Doune by her colere, at her backe behinde,
Which with a threde of gold ſhe woulde binde. 812

And ſave her browis joynedin ifere
There n'as no lacke in aught I can eſpien;
But for to ſpekin of her eyin clere,
Lo! truily thei writtin that her ſeien
That paradis ſtode formid in her eien,
And with her richè beaute evirmore
Strove love in her aie which of 'hem was more. 819

She ſobre was, ſimple, and wiſe withall,
The beſt inoriſhid eke that might be,
And godely of her ſpeche in generall,
Charitable, eſtately, luſty, and fre,
Ne nevirmore ne lackid her pite,
Tendrehertid, and ſliding of corage,
But truily I can nat tel her age. 826

And Troilus wel woxin was in hight,
And complete, formid by proporcioun
So wel, that Kinde it naught amendin might,
Yong, freſh, and ſtrong, and hardy as lioun,
And trewe as ſtele in eche condicioun,
One of the beſt entetchid creature
That is or ſhal while that the world maie dure.

And certainly in ſtory it is fonde
That Troilus was nevir to no wight,
As in his time, in no degre ſeconde
In daring do that longith to a knight;
Al might a giaunt paſſin him of might
His hert aie with the firſt and with the beſt
Stode peregall to dare done what him leſt.

But for to tellin forthe of Diomede
It fil, that aftir on the tennith daie
Sens that Creſeide out of the cite yede
This Diomede, as freſh as braunche in Maie,
Came to the tentè there as Calchas laie,
And fainid him with Calchas have to done,
But what he mente I ſhal you tellin ſone.

Creſeidè, at ſhorte wordis for to tel,
Welcomid him, and doun him by her ſette,
And he was ethe inough to makin dwel;
And aftir this, withoutin longè lette,
The ſpicis and the wine men forth 'hem fette,
And forthe thei ſpeke of this and that ifere,
As frendis done, of whiche ſome ſhall ye here.

He gan firſt fallin of the warre in ſpeche
Betwixin them and the folke of Troie toun,
And of th' aſſiege he gan eke her beſeche
To tellin him what was her opinioun;
Fro that demaunde he ſo diſcendith doun
To aſkin her if that her ſtraungè thought
The Grekis giſe and werkis that thei wrought, 861

And why her fathir taryith ſo long
To weddin her unto ſome worthy wight?
Creſeidè, that was in her painis ſtrong
For love of Troilus her ownè knight,
So ferforth as ſhe conning had or might
Anſwerde him tho, but as of his entente
It ſemid that ſhe ne wiſt what he mente. 868

But nathèleſſe this ilkè Diomede
Gan on him ſelfe aſſure, and thus he ſeide;
If I aright have takin on you hede
Me thinkith thus, o lady mine Creſeide!
That ſens I firſt hond on your bridil leide,
When I out came of Troiè by the morow,
Ne might I nevir ſene you but in ſorow. 875

I can nat ſaine what maie the cauſè be,
But if for love of ſome Trojan it were,
The whiche right ſore wouldin athinkin me,
That ye for any wight that dwellith there
Shuldin yſpil a quartir of a tere,
Or pitouſly your ſelvin ſo begile,
For dredèleſſe it is nat worthe the while. 882

The folke of Troie, as who ſaith al and ſome,
In priſon ben, as ye your ſelvin ſe,
Fro thennis ſhal nat one on livè come
For al the golde atwixin ſunne and ſe;
Truſtith wel this, and underſtondith me,
There ſhal nat one to mercy gone on live,
Al were he lord of worldis twiſe five.

Such wrech on them for fetching of Heleine
There ſhal be take, er that we hennis wende,
That Manes, whiche that goddis ben of Peine,
Shal ben agaſt that Grekis wol'hem ſhende;
And men ſhal drede unto the world'is ende
From hennis forthe to raviſhe any quene,
So cruil ſhal our wreche on them be ſene.

And but if Calchas led us with *ambages*,
That is to ſaine, with double wordis ſlie,
Suche as men clepen a word with two viſages,
Ye ſhal wel knowin that I do nat lie,
And al this thing right ſene it with your eie,
And that anon, ye n'il nat trowe how ſone;
Now takith hede, for it is for to done.

What! wenin ye that your wiſe fathir would
Have yevin Antenor for you anon
If he ne wiſtè that the cite ſhould
Diſtroyid ben? Why, nay: ſo mote I gone
He knew ful wel there ſhal nat ſcapin one
That Trojan is, and for the gretè fere
He durſt nat that ye dwellid lengir there.

What wol ye more, o lovesome lady dere!
Let Troie and Trojans fro your hertè passe;
Drive out the bittir hope, and make gode chere,
And clepe ayen the beaute of your face,
That ye with saltè teris so deface,
For Troie is brought in suche a jeopardie
That it to save is now no remedie. 917

And thinkith wel ye shal in Grekis finde
A love more parfite, er that it be night,
Than any Trojan is, and morè kinde,
And bet to servin you wol don his might;
And if that ye vouchsafe, my lady bright!
I wol ben he to servin you my selve,
Ye, levir than be lorde of Grecis twelve. 924

And with that word he gan to waxin red,
And in his speche a litil while he quoke,
And cast aside a litil with his hed,
And stinte a while, and aftirwarde he woke,
And sobrely on her he threwe his loke,
And said, I am, al be' it to you no joie,
As gentle' a man as any wight in Troie: 931

For if my fathir Tydeus, he seide,
Ilivid had, tho I had ben er this
Of Calidony' and Arge a king, Creseide,
And so hope I that I shal yet iwis,
But he was slaine, alas! the more harm is,
Unhappily at Thebis al to rathe,
Polynices and many' a man to scathe. 938

But, hertè mine! ſithe that I am your man,
And ye ben the firſt of whom I ſeche grace,
To ſervin you as hertely as I can,
And evir ſhal while I to live have ſpace,
So that er I depart out of this place
Ye wol me grauntin that I maie to morow
At bettir laiſir tel you of my ſorow. 945

What ſhould I tell his wordis that he ſeide?
He ſpake inough for o daie at the meſt;
It previth wel he ſpake ſo that Creſeide
Grauntid on the morow at his requeſt
Forthy to ſpekin with him at the leſte,
So that he n'olde ſpekin of ſuche matere,
And thus ſhe to him ſaid, as ye mowe here, 952

As ſhe that had her hert on Troilus
So faſt yſet that none might it arace,
And ſtraungèly ſhe ſpake, and ſeidè thus:
O Diomede! I love that ilkè place
There I was borne, and Jovis of thy grace
Delivre' it ſone of al that doth it care:
God for thy might ſo leve it wel to fare! 959

That Grekis wold ther wrath on Troyè wreke,
If that thei might, I know it wel iwis;
But it ſhal naught befallin as ye ſpeke,
And God toforne; and farthir ovir this
I wote, my fathir wiſe and redy is,
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde,
So dere I am to him the more yholde. 966

That Grekis ben of high condicioun
I wote eke well, but certaine men ſhall finde
As worthy folkè within Troiè toun,
As conning, as parſite, and eke as kinde,
As ben betwixtin Orcades and Inde;
And that ye couldin wel your lady ſerve
I trowe eke wel, her thonke for to deſerve. 973

But as to ſpeke of love, iwis, ſhe ſeidè,
I had a lorde to whom I weddid was,
The whoſe mine hert was al til that he deide,
And othir love, as helpe me now Pallas,
There in mine hert ne is ne nevir was;
And that ye ben of noble' and high kinrede
I have wel herde it tellin out of drede. 980

And that doth me to have ſo gret a wonder
That ye wol ſcornin any woman ſo;
Eke God wote love and I ben fer aſonder;
I am diſpoſid bet, ſo mote I go,
Unto my deth to plaine and makin wo:
What I ſhal aftir done I can nat ſaie,
But truily as yet me liſte nat plaie. 987

Mine hert is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armis beſy daie by daie;
Hereaftir when ye wonnin have the toun
Paravintur than ſo it happin maie
That whan I ſe that I nevir ere ſaie
Than wol I werke that I nevir ere wrought;
This word to you inough ſuffiſin ought. 994

To morow eke wol I ſpeke with you faine,
So that ye touchin nought of this matere,
And whan you liſt ye maie come here againe;
And er ye gon thus muche I ſaie you here,
As helpe me Pallas with her heris clere,
Yf that I ſhould of any Greke have routhe
It ſhould ybe your ſelvin by my trouthe.

I ſaie nat therfore that I wol you love,
Ne ſaie nat naie, but, in concluſioun,
I menè wel, by God that ſit above;
And therwithal ſhe caſt her eyin doun,
And gan to ſigh, and ſaide, O Troyè toune!
Yet bidde I God in quiet and in reſt
I maie the ſene, or do mine hertè breſt.

But in effecte, and ſhortely for to ſaie,
This Diomede al freſhly newe againe
Gan preaſin on, and faſt her mercy praie;
And aftir this, the ſothè for to ſaine,
Her glove he toke, of which he was ful faine,
And, finally, whan it was woxin eve,
And al was wel, he roſe and toke his leve.

The bright Venus folowid and aie taught
The waie there brodè Phœbus doun'e alight,
And Cytherea her chare-horſe o'r raught
To whirle into the Lioun if ſhe might,
And Signifer his candils ſhewith bright,
Whan that Creſeidè unto her bed wente
Within her fathir'is faire brightè tente,

Retourning in her ſoule aie up and doun
The wordis of this ſodaine Diomede,
His gret eſtate, and peril of the toun,
And that ſhe was alone, and haddè nede
Of frendis helpe, and thus began to drede
The cauſis why, the ſothè for to tell,
That ſhe toke fully purpoſe for to dwell.

The morow came, and, goſtly for to ſpeke,
This Diomede is come unto Creſeide;
And, ſhortly, leſt that ye my talè breke,
So wel he for himſelfin ſpake and ſeide
That al her ſighis ſore adoun he leide;
And, finally, the ſothè for to ſaine,
He refte her of the grete of alle her pain.

And aftir this the ſtory tellith us
That ſhe unto him yave the faire baie ſtede
The whiche ſhe onis wan of Troilus,
And eke a broche (and that was litil nede)
That Troilus was ſhe yave this Diomede,
And eke the bet from ſorowe' him to releve
She made him were a pencell of her ſleve.

I finde eke in the ſtory ellis where,
Whan through the body hurt was Diomede
Of Troilus tho wepte ſhe many' a tere
Whan that ſhe ſaw his widè woundis blede,
And that ſhe toke to kepin him gode hede,
And for to helin him of his woundes ſmerte:
Men ſaine, I n'ot, that ſhe yeve him her herte.

But truily the ſtory tellith us
There madin nevir woman more wo
Than ſhe whan that ſhe falſid Troilus;
She ſaide Alas! for now is clene ago
My name in trouthe of love for evirmo,
For I have falſid one the gentilleſt
That ever was, and one the worthieſt. 1057

Alas! of me unto the world is ende
Shall neithir ben iwrittin or iſong
No gode worde, for theſe bokis woll me ſhende;
Irollid ſhall I ben on many a tong,
Throughout the world my bell ſhall be yrong,
And women moſte woll hatin me of all;
Alas that ſoche a caas me ſhould befall! 1064

Thei woll ſain, in as moche as in me is
I have 'hem doen diſhonour, welawaie!
All be I not the firſt that did amis,
What helpith that to doen my blame awaie?
But ſens I ſe there is no bettir waie,
And that to late is now for me to rue,
To Diomede I woll algate be true. 1071

But, Troilus, ſens I no bettir maie,
And ſens that thus departin ye and I,
Yet praie I God ſo yeve you right gode daie,
As for the gentilliſt knight truily
That er I ſawe to ſervin faithfully,
And beſt can aie his ladie's honour kepe,
(And with that worde ſhe braſt anon to wepe.) 1078

And certis you ne hatin ſhall I never,
And frend'is love that ſhall ye have of me,
And my gode worde, all ſhould I livin ever;
And truily I would right ſorie be
For to ſein you in adverſite;
And giltileſſe I wot well I you leve;
And all ſhall paſſe, and thus take I my leve.

But truily how long it was bitwene
That ſhe forſoke him for this Diomede
There is none auctour tellith it I wene,
Take every man now to his bokis hede
He ſhall no termè findin out of drede,
For though that he began to wowe her ſone,
Er he her wan yet was there more to done.

Ne me ne liſt this ſelie woman chide
Ferthir than that the ſtorie woll deviſe;
Her name, alas! is publiſhid ſo wide
That for her gilt it ought inough ſuffiſe;
And if I might excuſe her in ſome wiſe,
For ſhe ſo ſorie was for her untrouthe,
Iwis I would excuſe her yet for routhe.

This Troilus, as I before have told,
Thus drivith forth as wel as he hath might,
But oftin was his hertè hote and cold,
And namily that ilkè ninithe night
Whiche on the morowe ſhe had him behight
To come ayen; God wote full little reſt
Had he that night; nothing to ſlepe him left.

The laurir-crounid Phœbus with his hete
Gan in his course aie upward as he went
To warme of the est se the wavis wete,
And Circe'is doughtir song with freshe entent,
Whan Troilus his Pandare aftir sent,
And on the wallis of the toune thei pleide,
To loke if thei can sene aught of Creseide; 1113

Till it was none thei stodin for to se
Who that there came, and every manir wight
That came fro ferre thei saidin it was she,
Till that thei couldin knowin him aright:
Now was his hertè dull, now was it light;
And thus bejapid stodin for to stare
About naught this Troilus and Pandare. 1120

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seide;
For aught I wot before none sikirly
Into this toune ne comith not Creseide,
She hath inough to doin hardily
To twinnin from her fathir, so trowe I;
Her oldè fathir woll yet make her dine
Er that she go; God yeve his hertè pine! 1127

Pandare answerd, It maie well ben certain,
And forthy let us dine, I the beseche,
And aftir none than maist thou come again:
And home thei go withoutin morè speche,
And comin ayen; but long maie thei seche
Er that thei findin that thei aftir gape;
Fortune 'hem bothe ythinkith for to jape. 1134

(Quod Troilus) I se well now that she
Is taryid with her old fathir so
That er she come it woll nigh evin be;
Come forthe, I woll unto the yatè go,
These portirs ben unkonning evirmo,
And I woll doen 'hem holdin up the yate
As naught ne were, although she comin late. 1141

The daie goth fast, and aftir that came eve,
And yet came nat to Troilus Creseide:
He lokith forth by hedge, by tre, by greve,
And ferre his hedde ovir the wall he leide,
And at the last he tournid him, and seide,
By God I wote her mening now, Pandare;
Almoste iwis all newe was all my care. 1148

Now doutless this ladie can her gode;
I wote she comith riding privily;
I commendin her wisedome by mine hode;
She woll nat makin peple nicily
Gaure on her whan she cometh, but softily
By night into the toune she thinkith ride,
And, dere brothir! thinke nat long to abide. 1155

We have naught ellis for to doen iwis;
And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowin me,
Have here my trouth I se her: yond she is:
Heve up thine eyin man; maiest thou nat se?
Pandare answerid, Naie, so mote I the;
All wrong by God: what saist thou man? wher art?
That I se yonde afarre n'is but a carte. 1162

Alas! thou ſaieſt right ſothe, (quod Troilus)
But hardily it is not all for nought
That in mine herte I now rejoicè thus;
It is ayenſt ſome gode: I have a thought,
N'ot I nat how, but ſens that I was wrought
Ne felt I ſoche a comfort dare I ſaie:
She cometh to night, my life that durſt I lay. 1169

Pandare anſwerde, It maie be well inough;
And helde with him of all that er he ſaied,
But in his herte he thought, and ſoft he lough,
And to himſelf full ſobirly he ſaied,
From haſilwodde, there Joly Robin plaied,
Shall come all that that thou abidiſt here;
Ye, farwell all the ſnowe of fernè yere. 1176

The wardein of the yatis gan to call
The folke which that without the yatis were,
And badde 'hem drivin in ther beſtis all,
Or all the night thei muſt bylevin there;
And ferre within the night, with many' a tere,
This Troilus gan homward for to ride,
For well he ſeeth it helpith nat to' abide. 1183

But nathèleſſe he gladdid him in this,
He thought he miſaccomptid had his daie,
And ſaied, I underſtande have all amis,
For thilkè night I laſt Creſeidè ſaie
She ſaied I ſhall ben here, if that I maie,
Er that the mone, o my dere hertè ſwete!
The Lion paſſe out of this Ariete: 1190

For whiche ſhe maie yet hold all her beheſt;
And on the morowe to the yate he went,
And up and doune, by weſt and eke by eſt,
Upon the wallis made he many' a went;
But al for naught; his hope alway him blent,
For which at night in ſorow and ſighes ſore
He went him home withoutin any more. 1197

This hope all clene out of his hertè fledde,
He ne'hath wheron now lengir for to hong,
But for the pain him thought his hertè bledd,
So wer his throwis ſharp, and wondir ſtrong,
For whan he ſawe that ſhe abode ſo long
He ne wiſt what he judgin of it might,
Sens ſhe hath brokin that ſhe him behight. 1204

The thirde, the fourth, the fifte, and the ſixt, daie
Aftir tho dayis tenne of whiche I told,
Betwixin hope and drede his hertè laie,
Yet ſomwhat truſting on her heſtis old;
But whan he ſawe ſhe n'olde her termis hold
He can now ſene none othir remedie
But for to ſhapin him ſone for to die. 1211

Therwith the wickid ſpirit, God us bleſſe!
Whiche that men clepin the wode Jalouſie,
Gan in him crepe in all this hevineſſe,
For whiche bicauſe he wouldin ſonè die
He ne' ete ne dronke for his melancolie,
And eke from every companie he fledde;
This was the life that all this time he ledde. 1218

He ſo defaite was that no manir man
Unnethis him might knowin there he went,
So was he lene and therto pale and wan,
And feble, that he walkith by potent,
And with his ire he thus himſelfin ſhent;
But whoſo aſkid him wherof him ſmerte,
He ſaied his harme was all about his herte. 1225

Priam full oft, and eke his mothir dere,
Hir bretherne and his ſuſtrin, gan him frain
Why he ſo wofull was in all his chere,
And what thing was the cauſe of al his pain?
But all for naught; he n'olde his cauſè plain,
But ſaied he felt a greyous maladie
About his herte, and fain he wouldè die. 1232

So on a daie he laie him doune to ſlepe,
And ſo bifell it that in ſlepe him thought
That in a foreſt faſt he walked to wepe
For love of her that him theſe painis wrought,
And up and doune as he that foreſt ſought
He met he ſawe a bore with tuſkis grete
That ſlept ayeniſt the bright ſunn'is hete; 1239

And by this bore, faſt in her armis fold,
Laie kiſſing aie his ladie bright Creſeide,
For ſorowe of whiche, whan he it gan behold,
And for diſpite, out of his ſlepe he breide,
And loude he cried on Pandarus, and ſeide,
O Pandarus! now knowe I crop and rote
I n'am but dedde; there n'is none othir bote. 1246

My ladie bright, Creseide, hath me betraide,
In whom I trustid moste of any wight;
She ellis where hath now her hert apaied;
The blisfull goddis thorough ther grete might
Have in my dreme ishewid it full right:
Thus in my dreme Creseide have I beholde,
And all this thing to Pandarus he tolde. 1253

O my Creseide! alas! what subtilte,
What newè lust, what beaute, what science,
What wrathe of juste cause have ye unto me?
What gilt of me, what fell experience,
Hath fro me raste, alas! thine advertence?
O trust! o faithe! quod he', o depe assuraunce!
Who hath me raste Creseide, all my plesaunce? 1260

Alas! why let I her from hennis go?
For whiche well nigh out of my wit I breide;
Who shall now trowe on any othis mo?
God wote I wende, o ladie bright Creseide!
That every worde was gospell that ye seide:
But who maie bet begile if that him list,
Than he on whom men wenin best to trist? 1267

What shall I doen, my Pandarus? alas!
I felin now so sharpe a newè pain,
Sens that there is no remedy' in this caas,
That bet were it I with mine hondis twain
My selvin slowe than alwaie thus to plain,
For through the deth my wo shuld have an ende,
There every daie with life my self I shende. 1274

Pandare anſwerde and ſaid, Alas the while
That I was borne! Have I nat ſaied er this
That dremis many'a manir man begile?
And why? for folke expoundin 'hem amis:
How darſt thou ſain that falſe thy ladie is
For any dreme? right for thine ownè drede
Let be this thought; thou canſt no dremis rede.

Paravinture there thou dremeſt of this bore
It maie ſo be that it maie ſignifie
Her fathir, whiche that old is and eke hore,
Ayen the ſunne lyith on poinct to die,
And ſhe for ſorowe ginnith wepe and crie,
And kiſſith him, there he lieth on the ground;
Thus ſhuldiſt thou thy dreme aright expound.

How might I than doin (quod Troilus)
To knowe of this, yea, were nevir ſo lite?
Now ſaieſt thou wiſely, (quod this Pandarus.)
My redy is this, ſens thou canſt well endite,
That haſtily a lettir thou her write,
Thorough which thou ſhalt wel bringin about
To knowe a ſoth of that thou art in dout.

And ſe now why; for this I dare well ſain,
That if ſo is that ſhe untrue ybe
I can not trowe that ſhe woll write again;
And if ſhe write thou ſhalt full ſone iſe
As whethir ſhe hath any liberte
To come ayin, or ellis in ſome clauſe
If ſhe be let ſhe wol aſſigne a cauſe.

Thou haſt not writtin to her ſens ſhe went,
Nor ſhe to the; and this I durſt wele laie,
There maie ſoche cauſe ben in her entent
That hardily thou wolt thy ſelvin ſaie
That her abode the beſt is for you twaie:
Now write her than, and thou ſhalt ſelè ſone
A ſoth of all; there is no more to done. 1309

Acordid ben to this concluſioun,
And that anon, theſe ilke lordis two,
And haſtily ſat Troilus adoun,
And rollith in his hertè to and fro
How he maie beſt diſcrivin her his wo,
And to Creſeidè his owne ladie dere
He wrote right thus, and ſaid as ye maie here. 1316

The copie of the letter.

Right freſh flour, whoſe I have aye ben and ſhall,
Withoutin part of elliſwhere ſerviſe,
With herte and bodie, life, luſt, thought, and all,
I wofull wight, in every humble wiſe
That tong can tell or hertè maie deviſe,
As oft as mattir occupyith place,
Me recommaunde unto your noble grace. 1323

Likith it you to wetin, ſwetè herte!
As ye well knowin, how long time agon
That ye me left in aſpre painis ſmerte,
Whan that ye wentin, of whiche yet bote non
Have I non had, but evir worſe bigon
Fro daie to daie am I, and ſo mote dwell
While it you liſt, of wele and wo my well. 1330

For whiche to you with dredefull hertè true
I write, as he that sorowe driveth to write,
My wo, that every houre encresith newe,
Complaining as I dare or can endite;
And that defacid is that maie ye wite
The teris which that from mine eyin rain,
That wuldin speke if that thei durst and plain. 1337

You first beseche I that your eyin clere
To loke on this defoulid ye nat hold,
And ore all this that ye my ladie dere
Woll vouchsafin this lettir to behold,
And by the cause eke of my caris cold,
That slaeth my wit, if aught amis me sterte
Foryevith it me, mine owne swetè herte! 1344

If any servaunt durst or ought of right
Upon his ladie pitously complain,
Than wene I that I ought to be that wight,
Considrid this, that ye these monthis twain
Have taried there ye saidin, sothe to sain,
But tenne dayis ye n'olde in hoste sojourne,
But in two monethis yet ye not retourne. 1351

But for as moche as me mote nedis like
All that you list I dare nat planin more,
But humbly with sorowfull sighis sike
You write I mine unrestie sorowes sore,
Fro daie to daie desiring evirmore
To knowin fully, if your will it were,
How ye have fared and don while ye be there; 1358

The whose welfare and hele eke God encrese
In honour soche, that upward in degre
It growe alwaie, so that it nevir cese;
Right as your herte aie can, my ladie fre,
Devise, I praie to God so mote it be,
And graunt it that ye sone upon me rewe,
As wisely as in all I' am to you true.

And if you likith knowin of the fare
Of me, whose wo there maie no wight discrive,
I can no more, but chest of every care,
At writing of this lettir I' am on live,
All redy out my wofull ghost to drive,
Whiche I delaie and holde him yet in honde
Upon the sight of mattir of your sonde.

Mine eyin two, in vain with whiche I se,
Of sorowfull teres salt arn woxin wellis,
My song in plaint of mine adversite,
My gode in harme, mine ese eke woxin hel is,
My joie in wo: I can sey now nought ellis
But tournid is, for whiche my life I warie,
Every joie or ese in his contrarie:

Which with your coming home ayen to Troy
Ye maie redresse, and more a thousande sithe
Than er I had encressin in me joie,
For was there nevir hertè yet so blithe
To have his life as I shall ben as swithe
As I you se, and though no manir routhe
Can mevin you, yet thinkith on your trouthe.

And if so be my gilt hath deth deserved,
Or if you list no more upon me se,
In guerdon yet of that I have you served
Beseche I you, mine ownè ladie fre,
That hereupon you wouldin write to me
For love of Jovis, my right lodè sterre,
That deth maie make an ende of al my werre. 1393

If othir cause aught doeth you for to dwel,
That with your lettir ye me recomfort,
For though to me your absence is an hell,
With pacience I woll my wo comfort,
And with your lettre' of hope I woll disport:
Now writith, swete! and let me thus nat plain;
With hope or deth deliverith me fro pain. 1400

Iwis, mine ownè derè hertè true!
I wote that whan ye next upon me se,
So lost have I mine hele and eke mine hewe,
Creseidè shall not conne tho knowin me;
Iwis, mine hert'is daie, my ladie fre!
So thursthith aie mine hertè to behold
Your beaute that unneth my life I hold. 1407

I saie no more, all have I for to sey
To you well more than that I tellin maie;
But whethir that ye doe me live or dey
Yet praie I God so yeve you right gode daie:
And farith well, thou godely faire freshe Maie!
As ye that life or deth me maie commaunde,
And to your trouth aie I me recommaunde, 1414

With helè ſoche, that but ye yevin me
The ſamin hele I ſhall non hele yhave:
In you lieth, whan you liſt that it ſo be,
The daie in whiche me clothin ſhall my grave,
And in you my life, in you might to ſave
Me fro diſeſe of all my painis ſmerte: 1420
And farith now wele, myne own dere ſwete herte!

Le voſtre, T.

This lettir forthe was ſent unto Creſeide,
Of whiche her anſwere in effect was this;
Full pitouſly ſhe wrote ayen, and ſeide,
That all ſo ſonè as ſhe might iwis
She would come, and amende that was amis;
And, finally, ſhe wrote and ſayid then
She would ycome, ye, but ſhe n'iſt not when. 1428

But in her lettir madin ſhe ſoche feſtes
That wondir was, and ſwore ſhe loved him beſt,
Of whiche he found but botomles biheſtes.
But, Troilus, thou maieſt now eſt and weſt
Pipe in an ivie leſe if that the leſt:
Thus goth the world; God ſhild us fro miſchaunce,
And every wight that menith trouth avaunce! 1435

Encreſin gan the wo fro daie to night
Of Troilus for tarying of Creſeide,
And leſſin gan his hope and eke his might,
For whiche al doun he in his bedde him leide;
He ne ete, dronke, ne ſlept, ne wordè ſeide,
Imagining aie that ſhe was unkinde,
For which well nigh he wext out of his mind. 1442

This dreme of which I told have eke beforne
Maie nevir come out of his remembraunce;
He thought aie well he had his ladie lorn,
And that Jovis of his hie purveiaunce
Him shewed had in slepe the signifiaunce
Of her untrouth and his disavinture,
And that the bore was shewed him in figure; 1449

For whiche he for Sibylle his sustir sent,
That callid was Cassandre' eke all about,
And all his dreme he told her er he stent,
And her besought assoilin him the doubt
Of the strong bore with all his tuskis stout;
And, finally, within a litil stounde
Cassandra him gan thus his dreme expound. 1456

She gan first smile, and said, O brothir dere!
If thou a sothe of this desirest to knowe
Thou must a fewe of oldè stories here,
To purpose how that Fortune ovirthrowe
Hath lordis old, through which within a throw
Thou shalt this bore well know, and of what kinde
He comin is, as men in bokis finde. 1463

Diana, whiche that wrothe was and in ire,
For Grekis n'olde doin her sacrifice,
Ne encens on her altar set on fire,
She for that Grekis gon her so dispise
Ywrake her in a wondir cruill wise,
For with a bore as grete as oxe in stall
She made up frete ther corne and vinis all. 1470

To ſlea the bore was all the countrie reiſed,
Emongis whiche there came this borè to ſe
A maid, one of this worlde the beſt ipraiſed;
And Meleager, lorde of that countre,
He lovid ſo this freſhè maidin fre,
That with his manhode er he wouldè ſtent
This bore he ſlough, and her the hed he ſent.

Of whiche, as oldè bokis tellin us,
There roſe a conteke and a grete envie;
And of this lorde diſcendid Tydeus
By ligne, or ellis oldè bokis lie;
But how this Meleager gan to die,
Thorough his mothir, woll I you not tell,
For all to long it werin for to dwell.

She tolde eke how Tydeus, er ſhe ſtent,
Unto the ſtrongè cite of Thebes
(To claimin kingdome of the cite) went
For his felawè Dan Polynices,
Of whiche the brothir Dan Eteocles
Full wrongfully of Thebis held the ſtrength;
This toldè ſhe by proceſſe all by length.

She tolde eke how Hemonides aſterte
Whan Tydeus ſlough fiftie knightis ſtoute;
She tolde eke all the propheſies by herte,
And how that ſevin kingis with ther rout
Beſiegedin the cite all aboute,
And of the holie ſerpent, and the well,
And of the Furies all, ſhe gan him tell.

Aſſociat profugus Tydeus primo Polynicem,
Tydea legatum docet, inſidiaſque ſecundus,
Tertius Hæmoniden canit, & vatem latitantem,
Quartus habet Reges ineuntes prælia ſeptem,
Lemniadum Furiæ quinto narrantur, & angues,
Archemori buſtum ſexto, ludique leguntur,
Dat Thebis vatem Graiorum ſeptimus umbris,
Octavo cecidit Tydeus, ſpes, vita Pelaſgum,
Hippomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopæo,
Fulmine percuſſus decimo Capaneus ſuperatur,
Undecimo ſeſe perimunt per vulnera fratres,
Argivum flentem narrat duodenus, & ignem.

Of Archinorie's burying and the plaies,
And how Amphiaraus fill through the grounde,
How Tydeus was ſlain, Lorde of Argeies,
And how Hipome'don in a litil ſtounde
Was dreint, and dedde Parthenope of wound,
And alſo how Capanëus the proude
With thonder dint was ſlain, that cryid loude.

She gan eke tell him how that eithir brother,
Eteocles and Polynice alſo,
At a ſcarmiſhe eche of 'hem ſlough the other,
And of Argivis weping and ther mo,
And how the toun was brent ſhe told eke tho;
And tho diſcendid doune from jeſtis old
To Diomede, and thus ſhe ſpake and told:

This ilkè bore betokenith Diomede,
Tydeus ſonne, that doune diſcendid is
Fro Mele'ager, that made the bore to blede,
And thy ladie, where ſo ſhe be iwis,
This Diomede her herte hath and ſhe his:
Wepe if thou wolt or leve, for out of dout
This Diomede is in and thou art out. 1519

Thou ſaieſt nat ſothe, (quod he) thou ſorcereſſe,
With all thy falſè gheſt of prophecie;
Thou weniſt ben a grete devinereſſe,
Now ſeeſt thou nat this fole of fantaſie
Painin her upon ladies for to lie:
Awaie, (quod he) there Jovis yeve the ſorowe!
Thou ſhalt be fals para'venture er to morow. 1526

As well thou mightiſt lien on gode Alceſte,
That was of all creturis (but men lie)
That evir werin kindiſt and the beſte,
For whan her huſbonde was in jeopardie
To die himſelf, but if ſhe wouldè die,
She cheſe for him to die and gon to hell,
And ſtarſe anon, as us the bokis tell. 1533

Caſſandre goeth; and he with cruill herte
Foryate his wo for angre of her ſpeche,
And fro his bedde all ſodainly he ſterte,
As though all whole him had imade a leche,
And daie by daie he gan enquire and ſeche
A ſothe of this with all his beſy cure;
And thus he drivith forthe his avinture. 1540

Fortune, whiche that the permutacion
Of all thinges hath, as it is her committed
Through purveiaunce and disposicion
Of high Jove, as reignis shall ben yslitted
Fro folk to folk, or whan thei shal ben smitted,
Gan pull awaie the fethirs bright of Troie
Fro daie to daie, till thei ben bare of joie.

Emong all this the fine of the' jeopardie
Of Hector gan approchin wondir blive,
The Fatis would his soule should unbodie,
And shapin had a mene it out to drive,
Ayenst whiche fate him helpith not to strive,
But on a daie to fightin gan he wende,
At whiche, alas! he caught his liv'is ende:

For whiche me thinkith every manir wight
That hauntith armis oughtin to bewaile
The deth of him that was so noble'a knight,
For as he drough a king by th' aventaile,
Unware of this Achilles through the maile
And through the bodie gan him for to rive,
And thus the worthy knight was reft of live;

For whom, as oldè bokis tellin us,
Was made soch wo that tong it maie nat tel,
And namily the sorowe' of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse the well,
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell,
That what for sorowe, love, and for unrest,
Full oft a daie he bad his hertè brest.

But nathèlesse though he gon him dispaire,
And drede aie that his ladie was untrue,
Yet aie on her his hertè gan repaire,
And, as these lovirs doen, he sought aie newe
To get ayen Creseidè bright of hewe,
And in his herte he went her excusing,
That Calchas causd all her tarying.

And oftin time he was in purpose grete
Him selvin like a pilgrim to disgise
To sene her; but he maie not counterfete
To ben unknowen of folke that werin wise,
Ne finde excuse aright that maie suffice,
If he among the Grekis knowin were,
For whiche he wept full oft many a tere.

To her he wrote yet oftin time all newe
Full pitously, he left it nat for slouthe,
Beseching her, sithins that he was true,
That she would come ayen and hold her trouth:
For whiche Creseide upon a daie for routh,
I take it so, touching all this mattere
Wrote him ayen, and saied as ye maie here:

Cupid'is sonne, ensample' of godelihede,
O swerde of knighthode, sours of gentilnesse!
How might a wight in turment and in drede,
And helelesse, you sendin as yet gladnesse?
I hertilesse, I sicke, I in distresse,
Sens ye with me nor I with you maie dele,
You neithir sende I maie ne herte ne hele.

Your lettirs full the papir all iplainted
Commevid havin myne hert'is pite;
I have eke ſene with teris all depainted
Your lettir, and how ye requirin me
To come ayen, whiche yet ne maie not be,
But why, leſt that this lettir foundin were,
No mencioun ne make I now for fere. 1603

Grevous to me (God wote) is your unreſt,
Your haſt, and that the goddis ordinaunce
It ſemith nat ye take it for the beſt,
Nor othir thing n'is in your remembraunce,
As thinkith me, but onely your pleſaunce;
But beth nat wroth, and that I you beſeche,
For that I tarie' is all for wickid ſpeche: 1610

For I have herd well morè than I wend
Touching us two how thingis have iſtond,
Whiche I ſhall with diſſimuling amende;
And beth not wroth, I have eke undirſtond
How ye ne doe but holdin me in honde;
But now no force; I can nat in you geſſe
But allè trouthe and allè gentilneſſe. 1617

Comin I woll, but yet in ſoche disjointe
I ſtond as now, that what yere or what daie
That this ſhall be that can I nat apointe;
But in effect I praie you as I maie
Of your gode worde and of your frendſhip aie,
For truily while that my life maie dure
As for a frende ye maie in me aſſure. 1624

Yet praie I you on evill ye ne take
That it is short whiche that I to you write;
I dare nat there I am well lettirs make,
Ne nevir yet ne could I well endite;
Eke grete effect men writin in place lite;
Th' entent is all, and nat the lettirs space:
And farith well; God have you in his grace! 1631

Le vostre, C.

This Troilus thought this lettir al straunge
Whan he it sawe, and sorousfully he sight;
Him thought it like a kalendes of eschaunge;
But, finally, he ful ne trowin might
That she ne would him holdin that she hight,
For with ful evill wil liste him to leve
That lovith wel, in such case, though him greve. 1638

But natheless men sain that at the last
For any thing men shal the sothè se,
And suche a case betide, and that as fast,
That Troilus wel understode that she
N'as nat so kinde as that her ought to be;
And, finally, he wote now out of dout
That al is lost that he hath ben about. 1645

Stode on a daie in his melancolie
This Troilus, and in suspectioun
Of her for whom he wenid for to die,
And so befil that throughout Troiè toun,
As was the gise, iborne was up and doun
A manir cote armoure, as saithe the storie,
Beforn Deiphobe, in signe of his victorie; 1652

The whichè cote, as tellith Lollius,
Deiphobe it had yrente fro Diomede
The ſamè daie; and when this Troilus
It ſawe he gan to takin of it hede,
Aviſing of the length and of the brede,
And al the werke, but as he gan beholde
Ful ſodainly his herte began to colde; 1659

As he that on the coler fonde within
A broche that he Creſeidè yave at morow
That ſhe from Troiè toune muſt nedis twin
In remembraunce of him and of his ſorow,
And ſhe him laide ayen her faith to borow
To kepe it aie; but now ful wel he wiſt
His lady n'as no longir on to triſt. 1666

He goeth him home, and gan ful ſone ſende
For Pandarus, and al this newè chaunce
And of this broch he tolde him orde and ende,
Complaining of her hert'is variaunce,
His longè love, his trouth, and his penaunce;
And aftir Deth, withoutin wordis more,
Ful faſt he cried, his reſt him to reſtore. 1673

Than ſpake he thus; O lady mine, Creſeide!
Where is your faith, and where is your beheſt?
Where is your love? where is your trouth? he ſeide;
Of Diomede have ye now al this feſt?
Alas! I would have trowid at the leſt
That ſens ye n'olde in trouthè to me ſtonde
That ye thus n'olde have holdin me in honde. 1680

Who ſhal now trowen on any othis mo?
Alas! I never would have wende er this
That ye, Creſeidè, coulde have chaungid ſo,
Ne but I had agilte and done amis;
So cruel wende I nat your herte iwis
To flee me thus; alas! your name of trouthe
Is now fordone, and that is al my routhe.

Was there none othir broche you liſt to lete
To feſſè with your newè love, (quod he)
But thilkè broche that I with teris wete
You yave as for a remembraunce of me?
None other cauſe, alas! ne haddin ye
But for diſpite, and eke for that ye mente
All uttirly to ſhewin your entente:

Through which I ſe that clene out of your minde
Ye have me caſt, and I ne can nor maie
For al this world within mine hertè finde
To' unlovin you a quartir of a daie;
In curſid time I borne was, welawaie!
That you that done me all this wo endure
Yet love I the beſt of any creture.

Now God (quod he) me ſendin yet the grace
That I maie metin with this Diomede,
And truily if I have might and ſpace
Yet ſhal I make I hope his ſidis blede:
Now God (quod he) that aughtiſt takin hede
To forthrin trouthe, and wrongis to punice,
Why n'ilt thou don a vengeaunce of this vice?

O Pandarus! that in dremes for to triste
Me blamid hast, and wonte art oft upbreide,
Now maist thou sene thy selfe, if that the list,
How trewe is now thy necè bright Creseide:
In sondry formis, (God it wote) he seide,
The goddis shewin bothè joie and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene.

And certainly, withoutin morè speche,
From hennis forthe, as ferforthe as I maie,
Mine owne deth in armis wol I seche,
I ne retche nat how sonè be the daie;
But trewily, Creseidè, swetè Maie!
Whom I have ay with al my might iserved,
That ye thus done I have it nat deserved.

This Pandarus, that al these thingis herde,
And wiste wel that he said a sothe of this,
He nat a worde ayen to him answerde,
For sory of his frend'is sorow' he is,
And shamid for his nece hath done amis,
And stante astonied of these causis twaie
As stil as stone; o worde ne coulde he saie.

But at the last thus he yspake and seide:
My brothir dere! I may do the no more;
What should I saine? I hate iwis Creseide,
And God it wote I wol hate her er-more;
And that thou me besoughtist don of yore,
Having unto mine honour ne my reste
Right no regarde, I did al that the leste.

Yf I did aught which that might likin the
It is me lefe, and of this treſon now
God wote that it a ſorow is to me,
And dredeleſſe, for hert'is eſe of you,
Right faine I would amende it wiſt I how,
And fro this world Almighty God I praie,
Delivir her ſone! I can no more ſaie. 1743

Great was the woe and plaint of Troilus,
But forthe her courſe Fortune aie gan to holde,
Creſeide lovith the ſonne of Tydeus,
And Troilus mote wepe in caris colde:
Such is this worlde, who ſo it can beholde;
In eche eſtate is litill hert'is reſte;
God leve us to takin it for the beſte! 1750

In many cruil bataile, out of drede,
Of Troilus this ilkè noble knight
(As men maie in theſe oldè bokis rede)
Was ſene his knighthod and his gretè might,
And dredèleſſe his irè daie and night
Ful cruilly the Grekis aie abought,
And alwaie moſt this Diomede he ſought. 1757

And oftin timis I finde that thei mette
With blody ſtrokis and with wordis grete,
Aſſaying how ther ſperis werin whette;
And God it wote with many' a cruil hete
Gan Troilus upon his helme to bete:
But nathèleſſe Fortune it naught ne would
Of eithir's honde that eithir dyin ſhould. 1764

And if I had itakin for to write
The armis of this ilkè worthy man,
Than would I of his battailis endite;
But for that I to writin first began
Of his love, I have saidin as I can
His worthy dedis, who so liste 'hem here,
Rede Dares, he can tel 'hem al isere. 1771

Beseching every lady bright of hewe,
And every gentil woman, what she be,
Al be it that Creseidè was untrewe,
That for that gilt ye be nat wroth with me,
Ye maie her gilte in othir bokis se;
And gladdir I would writin if you leste
Of Penepole's trouth and gode Alceste. 1778

Ne saie I nat this al only for men,
But most for women that betrayid be
Through fals folke, God yeve 'hem sorow, *Amen!*
That with ther gretè witte and subtilte
Betrayin you, and this commevith me
To speke; and in effecte you al I praie
Beth ware of men, and herkenith what I saie: 1785

Go, litil boke, go litill tragedie,
There God my makir yet er that I die
So sende me might to make some comedie;
But, litill boke, make thou the none envie,
But subject ben unto al poesie,
And kisse the steppes wher as thou seist pace
Of Virgil, Ovide, Homer, Lucan, Stace. 1792

And for there is ſo grete diverſite
In Engliſh, and in writing of our tonge,
So praie I to God that none miſwrite the,
Ne the miſſe-metre for defaute of tonge;
And redde where ſo thou be or ellis ſonge
That thou be undirſtonde God I beſeche;
But yet to purpoſe of my rathir ſpeche.

The wrathe, as I began you for to ſeie,
Of Troilus the Grekis boughtin dere,
For thouſandis his hondis madin deye,
As he that was withoutin any pere,
Save in his time Hector, as I can here;
But welawaie! (ſave onely Godd'is wil)
Diſpitouſly him ſlough the fierſe Achil.

And whan that he was ſlain in this manere
His lightè goſte ful bliſfully is went
Up to the' holowneſſe of the ſeventh ſphere,
In his place leting everiche element,
And there he ſawe, with ful aviſement,
The erratike ſterres, herkening harmonie,
With ſownis ful of hevins melodie.

And doun from thennis faſt he gan aviſe
This litil ſpotte of erth that with the ſe
Enbracid is, and fully gan diſpiſe
This wretchid world, and helde al vanite
In reſpecte of the plaine felicite
That is in heven above, and at the laſt
There he was ſlaine his loking doun he caſt.

And in him selfe he lough right at the wo
Of them that weptin for his dethe so fast,
And dampnid all our werkes, that foloweth so
The blindè lust whiche that ne may nat last,
And shuldin al our herte on hevin cast;
And forthe he went, shortily for to tell,
There as Mercury sortid him to dwel. 1827

Suche fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love,
Suche fine hath all his gretè worthinesse,
Suche fine hath his estate royal above,
Suche fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse,
Suche fine hath this false world'is brotilnesse!
And thus began his loving of Creseide
As I have tolde, and in this wise he deide. 1834

O yonge and freshè folkis, he or she!
In whiche that love up growith with your age,
Repairith home from worldely vanite,
And of your hertes up castith the visage
To thilkè God that aftir his image
You made, and thinkith al n'is but a faire,
This world that passith sone, as flouris faire: 1841

And lovith him the whiche that right for love
Upon a crosse, our soulis for to bey,
First starfe and rose, and sit in heven above,
For he n'il falsin no wight, dare I sey,
That wol his hert al wholly on him ley;
And sens he best to love is and most meke
What nedith fainid lovis for to seke? 1848

Lo! here of Painims curſid oldè rites!
Lo! here what al ther goddis maie availe!
Lo! here this wretchid world'is appetites!
Lo! here the fine and guerdon for travaile
Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, and ſuch raſkaile!
Lo! here the forme of oldè clerkis ſpeche
In poetrie, if ye ther bokis ſeche! 1855

O, moral Gower! this Boke I directe
To the and to the philoſophicall Strode,
To vouchſafe there nede is for to correcte
Of your benignities and zelis gode;
And to the ſothfaſt Chriſt, that ſtarfe on rode,
With al mine hert of mercy er I praie,
And to the Lorde right thus I ſpeke and ſaie: 1862

Thou One, and Two, and Thre! eterne on live,
That raigniſt aie in Thre, and Two, and One!
Uncircumſcript, and all maiſt circumſcrive,
From viſible and inviſible fone
Defende us in thy mercy everichone!
So make us, Jeſus, to thy mercy digne,
For love of maide and mothir thine benigne! 1869

Thus endeth the fifth boke and laſt of Troilus.

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END OF VOLUME NINTH.